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FOREWORD BY TOM ZIGLAR

SECRETS *of* CLOSING *the* SALE

• REVISED AND UPDATED •

ZIG ZIGLAR

WITH KEVIN HARRINGTON

SECRETS *of* CLOSING *the* SALE

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You Can Reach the Top
Life Lifters
Zig: The Autobiography of Zig Ziglar

SECRETS *of* CLOSING *the* SALE

ZIG ZIGLAR
WITH KEVIN HARRINGTON

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To Bill Cranford

Who gave me my start in the world of selling and gently but forcefully pushed me to strive for excellence and reach for new heights. He was my friend, my brother, my mentor, and my golfing buddy. He was a great guy and *one more* fine man.

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Foreword

Several years ago, I was having dinner at a friend's beautiful home. His house was in a very nice neighborhood and his lake view practically demanded a cup of coffee on the deck. As we enjoyed our meal he said to me, "You know, Tom, I wouldn't have this house without your dad." He went on to explain that when he started his business, after he got out of college, he had no money and no customers, but he did have the sales knowledge and wisdom found in his copy of *Secrets of Closing the Sale*. Today he employs more than a hundred people and has offices in multiple cities.

In April of 2017 my sister Julie was speaking at a business conference for entrepreneurs. She shared the stage with Kevin Harrington, the original Shark on *Shark Tank* and the inventor of the TV infomercial. After getting to know each other at the event and discussing different ideas, Kevin said to Julie, "You know, Julie, if it hadn't been for your dad's books *See You at the Top* and *Secrets of Closing the Sale* I would not have had the career I have had. In fact, what I learned from *Secrets of Closing the Sale* is a huge reason my infomercials have sold over *five billion dollars* of products and services."

Wow! Five billion dollars in sales will get anyone's attention!

This revised and updated edition of *Secrets of Closing the Sale* is the fruit of Julie meeting Kevin. We realized the wisdom and teaching found in *Secrets of Closing the Sale* are timeless; however, technology, culture, and business are constantly changing. Because of this, 90 percent of the original book is unchanged. Kevin's new insights and examples of applying these timeless truths and techniques are added to make the book more powerful and useful than ever before. This book is perfect for any beginning salesperson or seasoned sales pro!

The landscape of selling is always changing. Globalization, the internet, and artificial intelligence are all combining to radically shift how selling will be done in the future. *Secrets of Closing the Sale* recognizes these

challenges while maintaining the foundation of things that will never change: building long-term relationships based on integrity, trust, serving, and solving problems. As my dad often noted, the secret to a successful sales career really is simple: “You can have everything in life you want, if you will just help enough other people get what they want.”

Our commitment to you from the Ziglar family is to constantly bring you the best personal and professional life-changing material in the world. That is why we are so excited about Kevin’s contribution to this book and why we are constantly looking for ways to partner with the best in the world, like Sandler Training. Sandler has more than 250 locations around the world and is now the official corporate training arm of Ziglar. This means that through this book, and through our global partnerships, we can serve you wherever you are!

On a personal note, I have had the opportunity to share the stage multiple times with Kevin and have traveled internationally with him. He is the real deal. He practices what he teaches and makes his decisions based on principles. He may be known by most as a successful businessman and entrepreneur, but at his core, he is a proud salesman.

Go ahead. Devour this book and apply it to your sales career.

Choose to win!

Tom Ziglar
CEO Ziglar, Inc.

Introduction

It's my conviction that of all the endeavors we can follow in life, outside the ministry itself, professional sales requires the highest degree of integrity. Here's why: We are trained to persuade. And an unethical salesperson (who is in reality a con artist) is capable of persuading people to buy overpriced merchandise that they should not be buying at all.

Our philosophy that *you can have everything in life you want if you will just help enough other people get what they want* is even truer today than it was when the book was originally published. The objective of every sale is to make certain the customer gets fair value, and if he gets more than fair value, not only do you have the sale but you've built a customer who will, in turn, help you build other customers.

There are many instances in this book in which you will read of people who walked away from a sale because they knew it was not in the best interests of the customer to buy. With this in mind, selling is much like many sporting events. The championship tennis player hits his shot in a way that puts him in position to hit the next shot even more effectively. The professional golfer does the same thing, as does the pool player. Every salesperson should think in terms of "What will be the result of this sale? Am I building a relationship, and hence a customer, or am I just making a few bucks at the expense of someone else?" I can assure you the last choice is a shortcut to oblivion in the world of selling.

To be candid, I feel very protective of this profession. Because of it, I have traveled the world over and experienced a high standard of quality, well-balanced living that was beyond my wildest imagination when I was growing up in Yazoo City, Mississippi. Because my gratitude is so great, I do what I can to promote integrity and professionalism in selling.

A firm conviction that what you're selling benefits the prospect is the first test of integrity. If you do not believe in your product or service enough to offer it to your own family and friends, then you should question the value of what you are selling. As an example, I spent fifteen years in direct

sales, selling heavy-duty waterless cookware. It has been nearly forty years since I sold my last set; however, my belief in that product was and is so strong that I was thrilled when my best friend, Bernie Lofchick, saw to it that as my children married, the first thing they had for their homes was a set of heavy-duty waterless stainless-steel cookware. When my oldest granddaughter married, my friend Dave Hurley, I'm happy to say, continued the tradition by giving her a set of stainless-steel cookware.

I am deeply indebted to the countless people who helped me early in my career. Some of the real giants were willing to share. I read their books, listened to their tapes, and became personally acquainted with a number of them. My gratitude to them is deep and long-lasting.

As you read this book, I encourage you to understand that the principles are solid, but many will require some personalization and adaptation to fit your specific product and your prospect's needs. Experience, common sense, and a studious perusal of the methods and processes contained in this book will be very helpful. I encourage you to be that constant student, to understand that you will not even begin to get the full gist of this book with one reading. You should keep a notebook handy as you read, because there will be key words and points that will jump to the surface. Mark the book. It's not something you want to preserve; it's something you want to use and "wear out" with use. I believe that as you follow the processes and put your heart deeply into this book, you will find it will have a lifelong impact on your sales career as well as your everyday life, because all of life is, in reality, selling, and all of us sell every day of our lives.

Finally, I encourage you always to remember that with the exception of small purchase items like pens, neckties, staplers, file folders, etc., the sale is not complete until the order is signed, the merchandise is delivered and paid for, and the customer is happy. That's career-building selling.

How to Use This Book. The title of this book clearly indicates that it is a book on selling for salespeople. The first chapter even more clearly demonstrates that it is a book on persuasion and will be extremely helpful to anyone who has to persuade others to take action of any kind (mothers, teachers, dentists, husbands, ministers, coaches, law enforcement people, salesmen—anyone).

To use this book most effectively, you need to do exactly what the Redhead did to me.[1] You need to take my words and the product I'm talking about and translate them into your own specific sales situation. This way

you have the best of both our worlds—the information I've managed to accumulate from personal experience and considerable research, combined with the knowledge you have acquired that is specifically applicable to your life, your product, your prospects, and your sales situation.

You need—no, you must have—a pen and a notepad in order to get the maximum benefit from this book. It's easy reading because it contains so many examples, illustrations, and stories. It is not a workbook, but it is a working-book, designed to get you involved in a learning—and not just a reading—process.

Since *Secrets* is written in narrative style, complete with considerable dialogue and humor, the reading will be easy and pleasant. In addition, this manuscript contains over seven hundred questions and well over two hundred fifty sales procedures, techniques, and closes wrapped up in nearly a hundred stories, analogies, and anecdotes.

The Book You Never Finish Reading. The first time you read *Secrets*, I encourage you to move through the book quickly, with your pen in hand, underlining or highlighting the things that really "grab" you. Don't analyze, but simply read as quickly as you can so you will get the complete message and the overall view of the book.

For your second reading, you're going to need a notepad that is approximately the same size as the book. That will make it easier to keep handy, even if you are on the road. I encourage you to title your notebook the same as I have titled this book, except add your name to the front. Then it becomes *Your Secrets of Closing the Sale*. Stop and commit to writing the ideas generated by *Secrets* that you can specifically use in your own sales career or personal life. The second reading will be lengthy and involved. Your objective is not to see how quickly you can get through the book but *what* you can get out of the book.

The third reading will give you an even broader perspective of the book, and you will add more pages and ideas to your own companion notebook. Again, this reading will take considerable time to complete; but remember, you are *investing* time, not spending it. Incidentally, I especially encourage you to read this book early in the morning, late at night, and on weekends. Do not take the day off from your selling to read! (The book will stick around—the prospect might not!)

The fourth reading will make you even more aware of the more than seven hundred questions in *Secrets*. As I wrote *Secrets*—the dialogue and

procedures frequently reflecting my own experience in selling—the questions came quite naturally. As I reflected on the manuscript, it was obvious to me that the question approach to selling is a way of life for me. One other advantage in reading the book several times is that this procedure, without your even being aware of it, will become an integral part of you. Your effectiveness will be greatly enhanced.

Even after the fourth reading, you will want to keep *Secrets* handy as a reference. Many of the questions, procedures, techniques, and closes will need to be read repeatedly so you can commit them to memory and make them an integral part of your life.

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1. When I talk about my one and only since November 26, 1946, I refer to her as “the Redhead.” When I talk to her, I call her “Sugar Baby.” Her name is Jean.

1

The Core Secret

The Key to Sales Success

BY KEVIN HARRINGTON

Why do some people struggle to sell their products or services—no matter how hard they try—while others seem to be able to sell just about anything to anyone? Why are some people barely able to keep the lights on in their businesses, while others experience mind-blowing, over-the-top success? Why do some people have great ideas and the best of intentions but never get traction, while other people have the ability to turn everything they touch into pure gold?

It's almost as if people who experience phenomenal sales success know something that others don't. It's like they have insider info that gives them an unfair advantage. It's like they have access to exclusive sales secrets.

Well, actually, they do.

When the Ziglar family asked me to write two new chapters for *Secrets of Closing the Sale*, I was honored. After all, Zig's influence was one of the most significant keys to my personal success. I'm an original Shark from the hit TV show *Shark Tank* and a successful entrepreneur for more than forty years. I'm a cofounding board member of the Entrepreneurs Organization and cofounder of the Electronic Retailing Association. I also invented the infomercial and helped make "But wait, there's more!" part of our cultural history. I'm one of the pioneers behind the *As Seen on TV* brand and have launched more than five hundred products generating more than five billion dollars—with a *B*—in global sales. And I'm the author of several bestselling books.

But none of that would have been possible if I hadn't become a protégé of the great Zig Ziglar and devoted myself to mastering his sales secrets. Mr. Ziglar really was the Master of Sales Masters. His timeless secrets have inspired thousands of millionaires. The original version of the book you're holding, *Secrets of Closing the Sale*, sold over a million copies. Zig touched more than 250 million people during his forty years of truly innovative sales success.

His legacy continues to make a lasting impact today because he never kept those secrets to himself. He wanted to spread success as widely as possible. Zig became more than functional; he became vital to the success of so many—including myself. He shaped my future as a young entrepreneur and empowered me to multiply my success exponentially.

Maybe you are just starting out in sales, or you recently launched a business. You may be struggling to get traction. You may feel like you're working hard, but you don't have much to show for it. Or you may be enjoying some success already but know you're capable of, and deserve, so much more. Whatever the case may be for you, Zig's secrets are timeless and work as well today as they ever did, even in the modern digital age.

Because of *this* secret Zig taught me . . .

Everything Is Selling

As I've done business all around the world, I've discovered that everyone speaks the same language—the universal language of selling. Just like a smile, money seems to cross all borders and barriers.

Sales is the secret ingredient for generating massive wealth that can do a lot of good for a lot of people. There's a reason more than half of the top 100 people on the *Forbes* billionaire list started out as salespeople. My fellow Shark Tank Shark and mega-millionaire Mark Cuban started out selling trash bags to buy new sneakers. After growing up in a low-income family, billionaire and former CEO of Starbucks, Howard Schultz, sold for Xerox. Even Warren Buffett, the world's richest man in 2008, started by selling securities in the 1950s. There's just something about selling that ignites innovators, creatives, and world changers.

Now you may not buy into what Zig and I are selling *about selling* because you've been conditioned to believe lies about selling itself. Have

you ever heard these before? *I don't like sales. I'm not really into selling. I don't want to be a salesperson.* Some people are even embarrassed to admit they sell anything. After the five billion dollars in success I've enjoyed in sales, I can't imagine thinking that way. But I run into people who think that way all the time!

Let's just blow those lies up right now. Zig was right: *Everything is selling.* Everything!

Think about it. You may be selling who you are on your résumé, your team on your vision, your idea, product, or service to the world. Maybe you're selling your parents on letting you crash at their place after graduation until you finish this book and sales start rolling in—or your spouse on taking a vacation to somewhere tropical. But you get the idea. You've made thousands of sales already in your life, so don't let anyone discourage you by saying you have no sales experience. You've been in the business of selling since you could speak.

The truth is nothing gets done *anywhere* until somebody sells something. Whatever you ate for breakfast started the journey to your table when someone sold something. You probably won't make any money this week unless someone—maybe you—sells something and makes money. Selling is what makes the world work and what drives the economy. And like Zig said, money isn't everything, but it is reasonably close to oxygen, on the "gotta have it" scale. You may have a great product or service, but until it gets sold, nothing happens. No one uses it.

And selling can truly change the world. Maybe you have a message you want the world to hear. Think of Martin Luther King Jr. He had a dream of racial equality. A lot of people had the same dream, but King sold that dream to America on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial—and he changed everything. Selling ideas, products, services—or even yourself—is what makes everything else possible.

I've built my entire career on the value of selling. So did Zig Ziglar. I firmly believe this to be true: *selling is the prerequisite to success.* It's the key to multiplying your influence and wealth. And here's the best part—selling doesn't discriminate. Anyone can master the sales secrets, but it starts by believing that sales success isn't only for everyone else. *It's for you.*

You can have it, if you really want it.

My Sales Success Story

My own story is a good example of how anyone can apply the secrets in these pages to become an over-the-top success. I like to use the expression "100X" to describe what's possible in life and business. Sometimes people give me skeptical looks. Occasionally, some even dare to say, "Really, Kevin? 100X? Isn't that unrealistic?" Not at all. Yes, I've built twenty companies to over one hundred million dollars in annual revenue each. Yes, I've sold well over five billion dollars in global sales. Yes, I've been able to realize so many of my dreams. But it wasn't easy. Not at all.

I wasn't exactly born with a silver spoon in my mouth. You wouldn't have looked at me selling newspapers at the age of ten and thought, "That kid is going to be on *Shark Tank* someday." I grew up in a loving, blue-collar Ohio family; don't get me wrong, but nothing was handed to me. In high school, while all my friends had nice cars given to them, I had to earn my own wheels. While all of them were out partying, I got to work—first at my dad's Irish pub and then as an entrepreneur.

If you live in an area where winters are long, you know how pathetic an asphalt driveway can look when spring finally arrives. In an effort to fix the problem, a friend and I learned about driveway sealing for asphalt driveways.

My friend was sixteen and already had his driver's license, so we worked out a deal with the sealcoating distributor to get fifty-five-gallon drums of sealant and give it a try. My buddy would load the product, bring it to the work sites, and do the labor. I would do all the door-to-door selling. We chipped in our money and bought a truck for only a hundred fifty bucks. It wasn't much to look at, but it got the job done.

Now, I knew I loved to talk. I had picked up that gift from hanging out in my dad's restaurant. So, the idea of knocking on doors didn't really faze me. But I quickly learned it wasn't going to be so easy. Picture the scene: You're sitting at home after dinner, reading the newspaper or watching some '70s TV show, and there's a knock at the door. You answer it to find a fresh-faced kid trying to persuade you to let him pour hot tar all over your driveway. Sure, you probably would like your driveway to look nicer, but when you ask, the kid tells you that he and his partner represent the entire workforce.

Well, you can probably guess what happened. I struck out. Again and again. In fact, in one neighborhood, I went 0-for-20. Now I was always pretty cocky, but even I was getting discouraged.

Then something changed. I didn't fully understand it yet, but I accidentally stumbled onto one of Zig's closing principles and then made it my own in a unique way.

I remember thinking, *Kevin, you want to help these people. But you need to* show *how you will help them. They can't visualize the good it will do for them*. In other words, I hadn't told the story well enough for them to clearly picture what a freshly coated driveway would look like.

The idea grew. If I could help one person by sealing their driveway at cost, I could show *everyone else* the change that could take place by using my service—and not just tell them. I could let them see the "magical transformation" that would take place when they buy.

So here's what I said to the next person who answered his door:

> We want to reseal your driveway to get rid of cracks, so next winter the water won't freeze and expand them. You're probably thinking we're too young to trust with the job, so here's what we want to do. Let us do your driveway for the cost of materials—twenty-five bucks. If you don't like it, you don't pay for it. But if you're happy with the work, I want you to let me put up a sign across your driveway and let me show your neighbors the before and after pictures.

It took only three tries before someone saw the value and agreed. I snapped before and after pictures and used them in every presentation after that. I went back to every house in that same neighborhood where I had been told "no" twenty times. This time I showed them the magical transformation that could take place if they worked with us—*and we sold eighteen of those twenty!* Soon I was selling driveways on every block, averaging five or six on a good day.

I began to grow—in sales, experience, and passion for sales and entrepreneurship.

Unfortunately, during Ohio winters you can't seal driveways, so selling high-end safety high chairs became my next entrepreneurial adventure. I was actually pretty good at it, making sales calls every night after school. But I found myself hitting a wall that I just couldn't get around. Has that ever happened to you? You feel like you're on the right track and then . . . you just get stuck? The problem was a lot of people would write a check while I was with them but cancel on me the next day. Talk about discouraging—a third of my sales consistently evaporated.

Just when I was thinking maybe I wasn't cut out for sales after all, my boss pulled me aside. He was a veteran sales pro with the company and said I had some serious potential *if* I was willing to learn how to sell. Of course, I said yes. (I didn't realize it at the time, but that experience was incredibly similar to Zig's own encounter with P. C. Merrell so long ago that altered the direction of his own success.)

But my boss wasn't done. He did something even more significant. He gave me one of Zig Ziglar's books—*See You at the Top*, which started me on a life-long growth journey. As I turned the pages, Zig taught me that "you are what you are and where you are because of what has gone into your mind. You can change what you are and where you are by changing what goes into your mind."[1]

Up to that point in life, I was ambitious, but not focused. I was energetic, but not disciplined. After I began soaking up Zig's wisdom, everything changed.

Zig opened my eyes to the power of selling, as he often quoted this description of selling:

> I am proud to be a salesman because more than any other man, I and millions of others like me, built America. The man who builds a better mousetrap—or a better *anything*—would starve to death if he waited for people to beat a pathway to his door. Regardless of how good or how needed the product or service might be, it has to be sold.[2]

From that moment on, I knew I was wired to sell and to build a business built on selling. Zig taught me that selling is really about serving. "To sell is to serve," he said. It's about giving value and helping people find solutions to problems, so they can live more fulfilling lives.

So, I went "all in." I embraced selling as the way to deliver my best to the world. By my first year in college, I had my first million-dollar company. I moved on to sell franchises to empower entrepreneurs. Then, because of my passion for selling, I saw television channels with dead air space and no late-night programming. I put that opportunity together with selling—and the infomercial was born!

When people ask me how to succeed in life and realize their dreams, I say this: learn how to sell. Selling truly is the prerequisite to success!

The Core Secret

I call it the core secret to getting everything you want. If you want to have sales success and be the right kind of salesman, you have to have the right motives. Believe me, I've known a lot of people who were talented at sales and business, but they couldn't be trusted. As Zig reminded me, we all want to be happy, healthy, reasonably prosperous—or even "unreasonably prosperous." As Zig reminded me, we all want to be happy, healthy, reasonably prosperous—or even "unreasonably prosperous," and secure. We all want friends, peace of mind, good family relationships, and hope—hope that our future will be better than today. Can you really have *all* of that—everything you want? Absolutely—if you will just help enough other people get what they want.

When I heard this core secret from Zig, it stuck with me—and I hope you let it sink in, too. "You can have everything in life you want," Zig insisted, "if you will just help enough other people get what they want." I call it the *core secret*, because it's central to the message of this book and to life.

But doesn't it sound like the opposite of what we usually hear? So many people assume that to become successful you have to be selfish and look out for number one. In reality, it's just the opposite. I didn't get to where I am today by walking on everyone else. You have to serve enough other people first if you want to succeed yourself. I started unlocking all the sales secrets that fueled my success only when I began applying this people-first secret. It transforms your perspective in three powerful ways:

1. It Confirms Your Desires and Dreams

Don't we all want to BE, DO, and HAVE more? And that's a *good* thing. You shouldn't feel guilty about wanting something better for you, your family, and the world.

So many people struggle to think they're worthy of success. They've been beaten down by circumstances, mistakes, or even other people. I've been there. I've been treated like dirt and double-crossed. I had to file Chapter 11 bankruptcy at one point in my early business years. Believe me, I know how tough sales and business can be. Things don't always go the way we think they will. But that doesn't mean YOU are defective. I know YOU have dreams and desires that will make the world a better place. (And they can make you a lot of money too.)

Zig put it this way: “Your attitude, not your aptitude, will determine your altitude.” I keep a statement from Paul J. Meyer on my wall to remind me of the power of a positive perspective: “Whatever you vividly imagine, ardently desire, sincerely believe, and enthusiastically act upon must inevitably come to pass.” I’ve used this simple, confidence-building, four-step process for decades to live out the core secret.

The core secret gives you something that’s hard to come by these days: permission to dream. I wouldn’t be where I am today if I didn’t dare to dream of having everything I wanted in life. Now, you may not become the infomercial king like I did. Your dreams will be unique to you. However, until you get clear on what they are, you’ll never attempt to vividly bring them to life.

2. It Puts Your Focus on Other People

The second powerful way this secret changes everything is this: it puts your focus on *other people*. If you can grasp this fact, you will do some serious good for you and the rest of the world. One of Zig’s most famous stories was about two of his pals who tried to draw water from an old-fashioned pump and came up empty. One point Zig made was that you have to prime the pump if you hope to get anything from it. You have to put something in before you can get something out.

Not believing this principle is why so many people don’t enjoy all that life has to offer today. The secret lies in delivering value first—solving a problem, lending a hand, or offering a solution. The value you give makes life better for others before you ever get a dime in return.

When you focus on other people it changes the way you approach sales. I call it the Genius Approach—a people-first, win-win perspective that supercharges your success. Zig taught me that if I treated people right, I would eventually get more money. So, I always took care of people, and I still do. Once I had the reputation for taking care of people, opportunities began flooding my way. When you look out for others, you always win.

The best kind of sale is where both sides come out with value. I’ve built my success on win-win relationships and have even taken pretty steep losses to preserve relationships. But at the end of the day, I think of it as providing added value to the relationship. It’s helping people solve

problems and accomplish goals. That's what a great sale really is: a situation where everyone wins.

One of my most memorable stories about helping others concerns Arnold Morris, the man who introduced me to Ginsu knives ("It slices! It dices!"). He was an extraordinary salesperson and really terrific guy. I first watched him at a booth in Philadelphia as he sliced through pieces of shoe leather, a Coca-Cola can, a car muffler, and a metal hammer. Then he proved the knife wasn't even dull by cutting tomato slices so thin you could read the newspaper through them.

Arnold had been selling knives for more than two decades when we first met. He had his sales presentation honed to an art form. But I saw a win-win opportunity by turning his live presentation in front of a dozen people into a video presentation seen by millions at one time in an infomercial. Actually, before anyone coined the term *infomercial*, I called it "sell-a-vision." To make a long story short, we partnered together to bring the Ginsu knives to America. We helped a lot of people, and best of all, we both made a lot of money, because it was important to me that Arnold won at a time when some of my competitors were taking advantage of people with promising products. A people-first focus wins every time.

3. It Multiplies Your Vision of What's Possible

Think about it. You can have everything in life you want if you will just help *enough* other people get what they want. There is magic in that one word—*enough*. The more people you help, the more you'll get what YOU want. So that brings up a good question: *How much is enough?* I don't mean how much will you sell, but how many people will you help before you say it's *enough*?

How many people are you helping right now? Think about a number. How many people are you helping right now with your idea, product, or service? Go ahead and get that number in your head. Is it a hundred, a thousand, fifty thousand, a million? How many are you helping right now? Picture it clearly.

Now, 100X it! How big is that number now? Ten thousand? Five million? A hundred million? Think about it! What would it feel like to help that many people? How much is enough now?

Unless, of course, you really don't want to help more people. But remember, the key to getting all life has to offer is to help enough other people get what they want. Once you blow up enough, there's no telling what's possible for your success!

I did this very thing back when I first had the idea for the infomercial. You may not know that my first infomercial wasn't for a product at all. When people think of infomercials, they think of some of my greatest successes like the Food Saver, Ginsu Knives, The Great Wok of China, The Flying Lure, Billy Mays, Tony Little, and George Foreman to name a few. But my success originally began by selling franchises to entrepreneurs one at a time.

Then I saw dead space on the Discovery Channel and seized the chance to fill that space with franchise opportunities, allowing me to reach millions. I saw how many people were realizing their business dreams one at a time. And I thought, *What if I could add two zeros to that number? How could I reach more people?* And the infomercial was born.

So, how many people are you helping? How many do you want to help? For Zig, it was over 250 million and counting. How many people will be enough for you?

The Magic of Putting People First

When you embrace this core secret, your sales success simply won't be the same. I know it wasn't the same for me. When you really see the mind-blowing value of applying this secret, your entire perspective shifts. It changes everything.

Now, sincerity is the key. You can't fake genuine concern for other people. We've all experienced what it's like to deal with a salesperson who doesn't want to be there. It doesn't matter how good the product or service may be, when we sense that the other person doesn't like us or isn't sincere with us, we're out of there. We have to become what Zig calls "good-finders." That means we actively look for the good in other people and point it out. We shine a spotlight on the good that we see in them and applaud it—sincerely.

So, if you struggle to connect and care about people in the sales process, what kind of feelings are you transferring when you sell? Are you sincere?

Are you people oriented? Or do you see people as a necessary nuisance and sales as a chore you must do to survive? If you're selling anything (and remember, we all are), then you're in the people business.

Secrets of Selling in the Digital Era

As a teenager, the only way I had to make sure my product got in front of the customer was by making face-to-face visits, knocking on doors, cold-calling, and so on. If I put up an advertising sign or billboard it stayed on one street corner, and I had no way of knowing its full impact on customer engagement. But now the game has changed.

The virtual market is more than a step up. The playing field itself has been transformed. Anyone who doesn't know how to navigate it will be three steps behind. I've experienced a lot of success by leveraging the power of television, but in the last decade, TV viewership has gone down drastically—*by 50 percent.* But there are no fewer eyeballs out there to watch. So where have they gone? They've gone to the web. They've gone to social media. They're looking to internet sources for information, entertainment, and the next big product.

Consider these facts:

It took radio thirty-eight years to reach a market of fifty million listeners.
TV took thirteen years to hit the same mark.
The internet took four years, the iPod three, and Facebook two.[3]
The *Pokémon Go* app hit fifty million Google Play downloads in fifteen days.[4]
Ed Sheeran's 2017 online album release had 375 million downloads in a week![5]

The numbers don't lie. Online markets and resources can make your potential for sales, income, and success exponential. And that's no exaggeration.

Timeless Selling Secrets

When *Time* magazine's CEO told me that their readership has rocketed to fifty-two million up from a single million six years ago, I almost didn't believe him. Hasn't online news been turning traditional news outlets upside down? Yes. But change doesn't mean the end. For years I had focused on product, product, product. But in today's market, personal brand-building is the newest catalyst for over-the-top success.

And the results proved it to me. When I started branding *myself* as the product—creating more written content, speaking on podcasts and at entrepreneurial events and in chambers of commerce—my influence grew, which resulted in further revenue growth and product sales. Growing a company has always been about chains of influence. The digital age lets you expand like nothing you've ever experienced.

Closing the sale in the digital age requires added creativity because you usually aren't looking your customer in the eye, reading their reactions and body language, and responding accordingly. But that doesn't mean the art of closing changes. You can read what they click, where they interact, how much video they watch, and so on. It still all comes down to people.

Think about webinars. You've probably signed up for one because it promised to help you solve a problem you were facing. These online sales presentations are, in many ways, a new form of the infomercial. You start with a guide who recognizes a problem and offers tremendous value and understanding. This guide speaks directly to you, where you are, and offers a solution. Infomercials often use a countdown to drive customers to action; good webinars are time limited and have a specific call to action or a special offer. The key is that the person who attends the webinar derives value from the experience whether they purchase or not. People first!

You see, this core secret and all of Zig's sales secrets remain incredibly effective in today's digital era because the principles behind them are timeless. The method of delivery may have changed, but the need to connect with people, to value and serve them, and to nurture and guide them through a purchasing decision hasn't. People are still people.

The same is true for digital product launches. It's easier than ever to create a digital course based on your intellectual property and serve as a digital guide for your customer. The closing language you use in all of your marketing materials—emails, Facebook ads, social media posts, web copy—should follow the same formula as Zig's closes always did. Ask compelling questions, address the customer where they are, remove the

barriers to closing the sale, add tremendous value, and blow them away with your generosity. Even the principle of "But wait, there's more" can be used in the digital age. Whether in a webinar, digital product launch, or just a weekly email you can always look for ways to surprise your customer with your generosity. Often, it's not even that hard, it just requires some creative thought to see how you can use what you have to blow your customer away. That's why I often give away simple PDF guides and cheat sheets, audio or visual recordings of my teaching, ancillary products or services, and even access to other courses or digital materials.

The key is to think like your customer and remember the core secret. Help them get what they want—a creative solution to their problem that really works—and they'll reward you with a sale. The method of selling may change, but the *secrets to closing the sale* are timeless. As you read this book, think about sales in the digital age and how with a little creativity you can use these classic sales closes just as effectively online as Zig did with customers in person. Remember, sales is about connecting to people, adding value, and serving sincerely. Do this and you'll create customers for life.

It's going to take some dedicated and creative thinking, and you may have to rewire some of the ways you imagine business connection and growth. But the foundational principles of selling will remain the same. That's what makes them timeless—they always adapt to the environment you put them in.

It takes only a moment of influence to start a chain reaction of success like Zig started in my life. In fact, many of my successful moments trace back to the very closes you're about to learn! In this revised edition, I'll drop in every now and then to share my secrets and stories with you. Keep an eye out for my Xponential Insights to see how to take your sales success to the next level.

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PART 1

The Psychology of Closing

Objectives

To “sell” the importance of the credibility of the salesperson.
To “sell” and teach the importance of commonsense psychology in the sales process.
To “sell” you on why you must learn to use your voice in the sales process.
To familiarize you with the concept that sales training alone won’t make a salesperson, but it will make a salesperson more effective.
To introduce you to a real sales pro and a series of professional sales techniques.

Closes and/or Procedures

The “Snooker” Close
The “Ownership” Close
The “Embarrassment” Close
The “1902” Close
The “Affordable” Close
The “Persuasion” Close
The “Want It” Close
The “Bride” Close
The “Alternate of Choice” Close
The “Now or Never” Close
The “Next One” Close

The “Fair Enough” Close
The “New Decision” Close
The “Voice Inflection” Close
The “Fear of Loss” Close
The “Cost” Close
The “Quality” Close
The “Answer for Everything” Close
The “Reverse” Close
The “Shame” Close
The “Extra” Close
The “Add On” Close
The “Gloomy Gus” Close

2

The "Household Executive" Saleslady

How much should we invest? We moved to Dallas in 1968 and I immediately started teaching a class in sales and motivation from nine in the morning until nine in the evening, Monday through Saturday. I was as busy as I've ever been in my life. But it was also house-buying time because we obviously couldn't live in a motel. The Redhead and I talked about a house in considerable detail until we finally arrived at a "reasonable" figure we would be willing to invest in a home. I know the figure was "reasonable" because she assured me it was "reasonable." (Personally, I felt the price bore a striking resemblance to the foreign-aid bill for the world!)

After we'd arrived at the exact amount we were going to invest in a home, she said, "Honey, suppose we find the dream house. I mean, exactly like we want. How much *more* can we invest?" That brought on a lot more talk. So we talked and we talked and we talked and finally arrived at a figure of an additional $20,000, which in that day would build an additional two thousand square feet of quality construction.

So house-hunting that Redhead went, and I mean she really looked—at two houses. When she walked into that second one, that ended all her house-hunting. She had found what she wanted.

How Much Does It Cost?

That night when I got back to the motel room, there she sat on the edge of the king-size bed. Even though she was *just* sitting there, the bed was

vibrating! I've never seen her so excited. She jumped up and said, "Honey, I have found our dream home. It's absolutely gorgeous! Four beautiful bedrooms on a big lot, plenty of room in the backyard for you to build that arrow-shaped swimming pool you've been talking about, walk-in closets in every room, and four bathrooms!"

Interrupting her to squeeze in a question, I said, "Sweetheart, hold the phone! How much does that house cost?"

Sugar Baby: "Honey, you'll have to see it to believe it, but you're going to love it because the den is monstrous and it has exposed beams and a cathedral ceiling. The garage is so big we will have room for the two cars and all our tools. Best of all, honey, there's an eleven-by-eleven-foot spot for you to build that little office where you can do the writing you've been talking about. And, honey, the master bedroom is so big we're going to have to get a riding vacuum cleaner! I'll tell you, that is soooooome house!"

Zig (interrupting her again): "Sweetheart, how much does that house cost?" She told me. It was $18,000 *more* than the *maximum*, which was already $20,000 more than we had any business investing!

Zig: "Sweetheart, there is no way we can buy a house like that!"

Sugar Baby: "Well, honey, I know that, but don't worry about it. You know we don't know a thing about real estate in Dallas, so I invited the builder to take us to the property after your class tomorrow night so we can both look at it and get a benchmark on real estate in this area."

Don't Let the Prospect Fool You

When we pulled into the driveway the next evening, I knew I had a problem. When we walked in the front door, I knew I was in bad trouble! The house was beautiful and was laid out precisely as I would have laid it out, had I been an architect. I instantly wanted that house—badly—but what we want and what we can get are sometimes worlds apart.

When I fully realized the situation I was in, as a protective measure I started to treat my Redhead and the builder the same way your prospects have been treating you all of your sales career and will continue to treat you as long as you're in the world of selling.

Even though I was interested, even *excited* about that house, *I acted as if I had no interest whatsoever*. The reason is simple. I was scared to death

that between her and that builder they were going to get me to do something I already wanted to do, was afraid I was going to do, and knew I had no business doing. I'm talking about buying a house that I was absolutely convinced was more expensive than we could handle. To protect myself from myself, I acted as if I had no interest.

The "Snooker" Close

There is a lot of difference between a prospect's saying, "I'm not interested," and "I really am interested but don't feel I can get it right now and therefore don't want to watch a presentation at this particular moment." Many times the prospect is in identically the same position I was in as I approached the front door of the house that the Redhead was excited about.

Now I would never accuse my Redhead of secretly taking drama lessons, but based on what happened next, I strongly suspect that she had. As we stepped up to the front door, she turned around and made huge sweeping motions with her arms and declared the yard perfect for the future construction of the circular driveway I had always wanted. As we walked inside, there was a nice chandelier in the entrance hall of the home. The Redhead didn't say a word, but she did come to a dead stop. It couldn't have been for more than a second. She turned slightly sideways, looked up, grinned, and walked on. That's all she needed to do. Message delivered—message received.

The "Ownership" Close

As we walked into the den, with mounting enthusiasm she said, "Look at the size of this den, honey, and aren't those exposed beams gorgeous?" Without waiting for an answer she continued, "And just look at *your* fireplace with all those bookshelves around it for *your* books [all of a sudden everything gets to be *mine*! That's good psychology!]. I can just see you watching the Cowboys whip up on somebody on Sunday afternoon out of one eye while watching *your* fire out of the other one."

Without pausing for breath she said, “Look back here,” as she took off in a dead run back to the master bedroom. “Just look at the size of it, honey. There’s plenty of room for the king-size bed, and we could put our two chairs and table over here. It’s perfect for us, because you know how we like to get up in the morning and have our coffee and quiet time together. And, honey, just look in *your* closet. Why, even as messy as you are there’s plenty of room for everything.”

Barely pausing for a breath, she said, “Look out here,” as she opened the back door and pointed to the big backyard. “Plenty of room for *your* arrow-shaped swimming pool. We can put the point of the arrow in the direction of the garage and the diving board on the other end will still be ten feet from the neighbor’s lot.”

As she stepped off the distance in the direction of the garage, she opened the door and said, “Just look. Plenty of room for the two cars, and here’s that eleven-by-eleven-foot space for you to build *your* office you’ve planned for so long.” As we moved back into the house, she said, “Look at this bedroom. Suzie will be gone from home in a couple of years and we’ll have that guest bedroom we’ve always wanted.”

When the tour was finally over, she squeezed my hand, looked me in the eye, and asked, “How do you feel about it, honey?”

The “Embarrassment” Close

Question: What could I say? Obviously I couldn’t say, “I don’t like it,” because that would not have been true. So I said, “Sweetheart, I like it. There’s no question about it; it’s a beautiful home, but you know perfectly good and well we can’t afford a house like this.”

Did this discourage her or dampen her enthusiasm? Not in the least. She looked at me, and with a twinkle in those beautiful, loving eyes, she said, “Honey, I know that, but I just wanted you to see something really nice—[pause]. Now we’ll go look at something *cheap*.” (Now come on, you don’t *really* think she would try to embarrass me into buying a beautiful home, do you?)

Not much else was said about the house that evening. We went back to the motel and to bed. I got up the next morning and was in the bathroom

brushing my teeth (I know you'll agree that when you've got a mouthful of toothbrush, you're handicapped, at least from a talking point of view) when she walked in and said, "How long are we going to live in Dallas?"

"Wrmwrmwrmmrr years," I replied, toothbrush still in mouth.

She couldn't understand my garbled reply, so she asked again, "How long?"

This time I removed my toothbrush and replied, "A hundred years. I'm forty-two. I'm going to live to be a hundred and forty-two, so that leaves a hundred." Sugar Baby: "No, I mean *really.*" Zig: "I do, too."

She's "Closing" In on Me

Sugar Baby: "Honey, do you think we'll be here thirty years?"

Zig: "I'll guarantee it! I love Dallas, it's centrally located for my travels, I hate to move—we'll be here at least thirty years, but why do you ask about thirty years?"

Sugar Baby: "Honey, if we live here just thirty years, how much does that eighteen thousand dollars figure out per year?" (She forgets—or ignores—the original price of the house. She forgets about the twenty thousand too much I felt our original commitment to a house had been. She forgets about the interest, insurance, and taxes.)

Zig: "Eighteen thousand dollars for thirty years would be six hundred dollars per year."

Sugar Baby: "How much is that a month?"

Zig: "That would be fifty dollars a month."

Sugar Baby: "How much is that a day?"

Zig: "Now come on, sweetheart, your arithmetic is just as good as mine. It comes to about a dollar and seventy cents a day, but why do you ask all these questions?"

Sugar Baby: "Honey, could I ask you one more question?"

Somehow I sensed as she stood there, all five feet, one and a half inches of her, with a twinkle in her eye and a "Look out, honey" grin on her face, that I was in the process of being had. But there was nothing I could do about it.

Zig: "Why, sure."

Sugar Baby: “Honey, would you give another dollar and seventy cents a day to have a *happy* wife—instead of ‘just’ a wife?”

Guess where we live?

The story demonstrates a lot of points, techniques, and psychology. First, I knew what that Redhead was doing to me, but there was nothing I could do about it short of being obnoxious. Like the vast majority of the people you will be dealing with in a sales situation, I wasn’t about to treat that Redhead in any such way. Really good technique, in the hands of a good person (you can’t be one kind of person and another kind of salesperson), is almost irresistible.

Translate to Your Situation

The “1902” Close

I tell this story—which is a true story—because I want you to do a lot of things. First, I want you to translate this story to your specific situation. I call the procedure the Redhead used on me the “1902” Close, because in 1902 a man named Frederick Sheldon described this close in his book. The Redhead had learned that close by sitting in on some of my sales training classes. When she heard that “1902” Close, she took it and applied it directly to her own situation and need.

Don’t “Hear” Everything

The second lesson in the story is the fact that for some weird reason the Redhead developed a hearing problem which I had never noticed before.

I kept saying, “Too much money, can’t afford it, not interested, can’t afford it, not interested.” To this day I don’t think she heard a word I said. She had already decided she wanted *that* house and she wasn’t going to listen to any negative talk about not getting it. I believe *most salespeople need to be a little hard of hearing when the prospect says they’re not interested.*

Think about it this way. When the prospect says, “Too high,” or “Not interested,” they are merely saying or implying that they are not going to give you their “big” stack of money for your “little” stack of benefits. In those cases, be like my Redhead and become a little “hard of hearing.”

Another factor which parallels this line of thinking is the fact that not once did that Redhead become defensive, argumentative, or antagonistic. All the way through the presentation she was lovingly and enthusiastically optimistic that she was going to make the sale. She never argued when I kept talking about money, and that’s good, because arguments often create antagonisms and it’s difficult to antagonize and positively influence at the same time.

The “Affordable” Close

Number three. My Redhead is an optimist and knows that I am also an optimist. She was confident I could make a bigger payment by getting another speaking engagement or making another sale. You, too, need to be optimistic that your prospect can handle the purchase. It is an absolute fact that *the salesman’s expectancy has a direct bearing on the prospect’s decision* in many, many cases. *Expect* a sale on every interview. (More on this later.)

Number four. She asked me a lot of questions, and those questions led me to the obvious decision that not only could we get the house but we should get it. You can sell more by asking than telling. That’s the Socratic (after Socrates) method, and it’s used by doctors, lawyers, accountants, counselors, ministers, detectives, and successful people from all walks of life.

Her Objective Was Clear

Number five. The Redhead clearly understood that she needed to make an $18,000 sale. Before she went house-hunting she had already “sold” the price we could pay. She had even “sold” the idea of going an additional

$20,000. As a super saleslady she knew there was zero need to discuss what had already been decided.

If you are in real estate and the prospect tells you they can go $200,000 for a house, then as a practical matter you have just gotten an order for $200,000. Your "selling" takes place only in the sense that you have to "sell" the prospect on a particular house in a particular location, and then you have to "sell" the owner on accepting your buyer's offer, which is almost always lower than the asking price.

Your major selling takes place when you find what the buyer wants and needs, but at a price tag of $250,000 instead of the $200,000 which your prospect says is their maximum price. If you clearly understand that you need to make a $50,000 sale and not a $250,000 sale, your task will be much easier. Actually, your prospect "bought" $200,000, and you had little or nothing to do with it. Their *needs* made the purchase from you or someone else mandatory.

The same thinking needs to be applied to any product on the market. If your prospect wants to invest X dollars but their needs come to X-*plus* dollars, then your real sale is the amount beyond what the prospect had already committed, in their own mind, to invest.

As I say, the Redhead had a sales job now of selling just the $18,000. She knew that if we talked about the $18,000 *plus* the $20,000 *plus* the original price *plus* the taxes, insurance, and interest, I would get financial indigestion. With this in mind, she took the *extra* amount, the $18,000, and broke it into such small units that it wouldn't even require a financial Pepto-Bismol. The late sales trainer J. Douglas Edwards called this the "reduction to the ridiculous."

The Redhead had worked with our budget long enough to know that regardless of how often you're paid or how you're paid, you spend money on a daily basis in order to live. She simply broke it down on a per-day basis, using figures she knew I could understand and felt confident I could handle. *She did not let the* why *we should buy serve as a stumbling block to the* how *we could buy it.* Point: Break the price down into small amounts so your prospects can afford it. Make it *easy* for them to buy.

Know Something about Your Prospects

Number six, you cannot get to know all of your prospects as well as the Redhead knew hers, but you should get as much advance information as is humanly possible. She also knew a great deal about what I wanted. She knew, for example, that as a child one day in a fit of anger I had said I was going to build a swimming pool, a big one. Learn as much as you can about your prospect and capitalize on that information. Learn how to use voice inflections, which we will thoroughly cover throughout *Secrets.* Break the price into small segments. Optimistically sell, and be hard of hearing. Ask questions to identify the problem and lead the prospect to the decision. Find out what they need to solve their problem, and show them how they can solve their problem with your product.

Three Things the House Didn't Have

The seventh lesson in the sales story is this. When we moved from Columbia, South Carolina, to Dallas, one of the things I shared with the Redhead was the fact that when we bought our next house she could make most of the choices as far as style, location, materials, and the "little extras" which would personalize "our" home. However, I did want to have three things in that house and she could have everything else. First of all, I wanted that arrow-shaped swimming pool which I've mentioned already. Second, I wanted a small office so I could write the book I had been talking about but doing nothing about. And third, I wanted a circle drive.

When we bought our house it had a lot of beautiful features, but there were three things the house did not have. Now, my reading friend, you know what three things were missing. However, the "saleslady," that Redhead, carefully pointed out where we could build a swimming pool, exactly where the office was going to be built, and the exact path for the circle drive.

This truly is a major point. Many times a prospect will ask you for something very specific. Now if you have exactly what they want, then you should fill that bill. But please remember that *many people do not know what they want because they do not know what is available.* In short, if you cannot fill the bill exactly, do not assume they are so adamant they would not even consider anything else.

From time to time, all of us have gone shopping for a specific item, couldn't find it, and ended up buying something else which we really enjoy much more. Just because the house did not contain those items I wanted did not eliminate the house as a good one to buy. The Redhead simply pointed out that we could add those things later and we could build them exactly like we wanted them and not how some builder might have built them. This really translates into using your imagination to help the prospect get what they want. Remember:

You can have everything in life you want if you will just help enough other people get what they want.

3

Making "King" Customer the Winner

Hold the phone! STOP: Don't read another word unless you have that pen I discussed at the beginning. Throughout *Secrets* you and I are going to be involved in a learning-motivational experience that will enable you to sell more of whatever you sell. You need that pen from "hello" to "good-bye," because you will need to circle, underline, mark, and make notes on virtually every page of this book, as well as in the notebook you need for the second reading. *Secrets of Closing the Sale* is an easy, fun-to-read book, but my major objective as the author is not to inform or to entertain but to get you heavily involved in a growth-and-action process that will be stimulating and financially rewarding.

It's Not Easy

It takes work to become a professional salesperson or to substantially improve your closing percentage while building customers instead of just making sales. Work—a lot of work—is required if you are going to fully develop your sales potential.

This goes far beyond just reading the script, but to put your mind at least partially at ease, let me assure you that one trip through these pages will definitely have considerable value. You will pick up thoughts, ideas, and feelings which will reinforce many things you already feel and believe but have not articulated. You will learn power phrases and specific words which will make what you are already using even more effective. You will be motivated to do more and use more of what you already have, and *your*

sales will probably improve before you finish the first reading. You will pick up new psychological insights which will help you to understand *why* prospects "respond" or "react" as they do to certain techniques and procedures.

This is especially important, because if you know how to do something—and then do it—you will always have a job. But if you know *why* it is done, you will be the boss or, in this case, the sales leader.

Convince—Then Persuade

Perhaps the most frustrating experience a salesperson has is to gain agreement from the customer that yes, the product is good; yes, it will save money; yes, they do need it; yes, they would like to have it; yes, they really could afford the payments; but no, they are not going to buy. Many times this indicates that the prospect has been convinced of the merits—or at least appears to be convinced and "sold"—but they have not been *persuaded* to take action.

Aristotle is considered one of the most brilliant thinkers of all time, but he had one belief which was completely in error. He believed if two different weights of the same material were dropped from the same height, they would fall at different rates of speed. This belief was taught at the University of Pisa. Years later Galileo entered the picture, challenged this theory, and started saying the opposite. The other professors and students were astonished that Galileo would dare refute what the great Aristotle had taught. They challenged him to prove his position.

Galileo did so by going to the top of the Leaning Tower of Pisa with two different weights of the same material. He dropped them together and they hit the ground at precisely the same time. He *convinced* the students and professors beyond any doubt that he was right and Aristotle was wrong. But guess what they kept teaching at the University of Pisa?

You're right. They continued to teach Aristotle's theory. Galileo had *convinced* them but he had not *persuaded* them. The questions are: (a) How do you persuade people? and (b) What is persuasion? The answers are: (a) You don't "tell" them, you "ask" them; and (b) persuasion derives from the French, "to give *good* advice in advance." In the following example I will specifically demonstrate the question-asking technique. Throughout *Secrets*

we explore and demonstrate the role the sales professional plays in the process of becoming a “counselor” or assistant buyer who truly gives “good advice in advance.” In the process of touching all the sales bases, as I indicated earlier, you will encounter over seven hundred questions. Now, the example.

The “Persuasion” Close

These questions are ridiculously simple—but it is critical that you answer them because this will clarify your thinking and set the tone for the entire book. What you answer will bear directly on your attitude and hence your success as a salesperson. Please use that pen, which you now have in your hand, and answer these simple questions *one at a time*:

Question: Do you sell a pretty good product? Yes No

Question: Do you sell an exceptionally good product? Yes No

Question: Do you sell a product that solves a problem or problems? Yes No

Question: Do you feel you deserve a profit when you sell a product that solves a problem? Yes No

Question: Do you feel you deserve two profits when you sell two products that solve two problems? Yes No

Chances are excellent you answered yes to all of these questions. What you’re really saying is you honestly feel that the more problems you solve, the more profit you deserve. That’s the way it should be.

Question: Have you been selling for as long as one year? Yes No

Question: If yes, do you still have all the money you earned in your last twelve months as a salesperson? Yes No

I think it would be safe to say your answer to that last question is no.

Question: Do you have customers to whom you sold over a year ago who are still using and enjoying the benefits of what you sold to them at that time? Yes No

If you answered yes, and in most cases you probably did, then the next question is, who was the *biggest* winner, you or the customer? Now if the customer is the biggest winner, who ought to say thank you to whom at the conclusion of the transaction?

Chances are fairly good that you spent all or most of your profit or commission shortly after you made the sale (if not before). Chances are also excellent that your prospect or customer used and benefited from what you sold them for weeks, months, or maybe even years. If you are selling a legitimate product that solves a problem and you sell it at a fair price, the customer makes the best deal.

Question: Is the sales process something you do to somebody or something you do for somebody?

(This is one of the most important and profound issues I will explore in *Secrets.* Your answer reveals *everything* about where your heart and interests lie in the world of selling.)

If, in your heart, you really feel the sales process is something you do *to* the prospect, then you are a manipulator. The dictionary defines *manipulate*: "to control the action of, by management; also, to manage artfully or fraudulently." Manipulation: "skillful or dexterous management, sometimes for purpose of fraud; state of being manipulated." I'll be the first to admit that manipulators make sales, but in my fifty-plus years in the profession I have never known even one manipulator who was *successful* in the profession. (As you read *Secrets* you will discover my definition of *success.*)

If, in your heart, you feel the sales process is something you do *for* the prospect, then this book will represent a significant addition to your sales library. Your benefits will be considerable because you are truly interested in benefiting others.

The world of selling is often the exact opposite of the world of athletics. I fought in the ring for two years. As a matter of fact, the only reason I quit was my hands—the referee kept stepping on them! One of the first things the coach taught me when I got into the ring was, "Zig, find the opponent's weakness and exploit it; find out where his defenses are weak and capitalize on them; take advantage of him." In football, the quarterback is told to probe, to find out where the other team is weak and exploit that weakness. In athletic competition you look for the opponent's weakness so you can exploit it.

In the world of selling you look for the opponent's (prospect's) weakness (need) so you can strengthen it by selling them your goods or services. Yes, the sales process is something we do for the prospect and not to the prospect. If you are truly professional, you will seek every legitimate means for persuading the prospect to take action for their benefit.

The Winner and Still Champion—"King" Customer

I used the preceding series of questions to establish in your mind that the customer really is the one who benefits the most. (I'm obviously assuming the product is legitimate, is fairly priced, and will perform as expected.) Now let's reverse that process and assume that, instead of asking you those questions, I had simply said to you, "Let's face it, my selling friend. As everybody knows, the customer is the big winner." Many of you would have agreed, but a high percentage of you would have thought facetiously, *Yeah, they are the big winners, all right, but then I didn't do too badly myself!* You would probably have this thought with a satisfied and mildly sarcastic chuckle under your breath.

The method I used, however, is simple and clear because I did not attempt to "tell" or "sell" you anything. If I had, you might have resisted. By my asking you questions, there's no way you can get unhappy with me about the answers *you* give to those questions.

Now let's translate this to your situation with your customers. When you ask or use this particular procedure, the customer is actually persuading themselves. There is no resentment and therefore the chance of their taking action—which is your objective—is much higher. Use the question technique. It works.

Here's Why They Won't—or Don't—Buy

There are five basic reasons people will not buy from you. These are: no need, no money, no hurry, no desire, and no trust. Since *any* "reason" or "excuse" for not buying will cost you a sale—and will cost the prospect the benefits they would accrue from the purchase—the missed sale is a loss for both buyer and seller.

Now because a missed sale is expensive to both buyer and seller, let's look carefully at each reason a prospect does not buy from you.

One of the five reasons prospects will not buy from you is *they do not feel they need what you are selling.* If everybody belonged to the old, old, *old* school of thought which says, "We should buy only what we need," then you and all other salespeople would be in serious trouble. I say this because most people have considerably more of everything than they "need." (How many clothes, how much floor space, how much car, how many TVs, how much food do you *need*?) Fortunately for us, and in most cases for the prospect, we buy what we want or desire. I deal with desire or lack of it as the fourth reason the prospect will not buy from you.

Now let's get back to the question of need and what it really means when the prospect says no. In many cases, if not most, the prospect says no because they don't *know* enough to say yes. More on this later.

The second reason most people do not buy is *they don't have any money* (and there are people who really don't have any—or enough—money). You can use all the techniques in the world and you still are not going to manufacture the money itself. Having made that observation, let me now state that I do not want to disillusion anyone, especially if you are new in the world of selling. When it comes to money, some people will actually *lie* to you when they say they don't have any—or enough—to buy what you are selling. (I'll bet you have a suspicion you've already met some of those folks.)

The "Want It" Close

This little story verifies that point. Many years ago, when I first entered the world of selling, I was calling on a Funderburk family in Lancaster County,

South Carolina. They raised chickens and sold eggs. I demonstrated a set of cookware for them and several of their friends. It was a complete demonstration and, since it was in their home, I had a chance to look through their cabinets and see the amount of cookware they did *not* have. Their need for a good set of cookware was obvious. I tried for two solid hours to make the sale but never came close. Mrs. Funderburk kept saying, "No money, too expensive, can't afford it!" She sounded like a broken record!

Then somehow, somewhere, somebody said something about fine china. I don't know if it was Mrs. Funderburk or me. At the mention of fine china, Mrs. Funderburk's eyes lit up like the proverbial Christmas tree and the following dialogue took place.

Mrs. Funderburk: "Do you have fine china?" Zig (smiling): "We just happen to have the finest china in the whole world!" (At least that's the way I saw it!) Mrs. Funderburk: "Do you have any with you?" Zig (getting up to make a mad dash to the car): "You're in luck!"

A few minutes later I was leaving the Funderburk home with an order for china which involved substantially more dollars than the cookware which I had been trying to sell. Actually, no "selling" was involved. It was just a question of choosing the china pattern she preferred and working out the financial arrangements.

Question: If she bought the china which cost more than the cookware which was "too expensive" and which she "couldn't afford," was she lying when she said she didn't have the money? Interesting question, isn't it? Actually, the answer is yes, she was lying—and I'm one of those purists who believes that a lie is a lie is a lie.

However, the purpose of this book is to help you persuade more people to take action in their own best interests, so let's move over to the customer's side of the table where we can think her thoughts, feel her feelings, and become *an assistant buyer.* (This is important whether you sell china, cars, computers, or anything else.)

When Mrs. Funderburk was saying she had no money and couldn't afford the cookware, she was completing the sentence to herself in this manner: "I don't have any money for that cookware because I *don't want* the set of cookware." Thus she rationalized that she was actually "telling the truth," even though she was telling part of it so quietly no one else could hear it!

The key in situations like this is probing to uncover the real reason she was not buying the cookware. I deal with this probing technique throughout this book. Mrs. Funderburk bought the china because (1) she *really* wanted it; (2) she trusted me as a person; and (3) I was courteously persistent in my role as probing assistant buyer and, in the process, she revealed her desire to own fine china and not the cookware.

People Buy What They Want

The minute she saw that beautiful china, she said (to herself), *I've got money for that set of china because I* want *that set of china.* Realistically, she desperately needed the cookware and would have used it daily for life. She probably used that china only a few times each year, if that often, BUT SHE *WANTED* THAT CHINA. Critical sales point:

People buy what they want when they want it more
than they want the money it costs.

Let me sum it up as we explore the best way to build a sales career. People are going to buy, in most cases, what they really *want*—not necessarily what they need. It is your opportunity *and* responsibility to sell the legitimate benefits of your goods and services in a legitimate manner, so your prospect will *want* to buy from you, again and again.

It's Possible to Back Up—and Go Forward

The third reason a lot of people don't buy is this: *They're just not in a hurry.* It doesn't matter to them whether they buy today—or next year. In essence, they are often thinking, and sometimes asking, "What do you mean, I've got to buy today? I'm thirty-nine years old. I've lived all of my life without this earth-shattering product. You're not just passing through town, are you?" Or "I mean, you *are* going to be here, aren't you? You're not closing your doors, are you? What's your hurry?" Realistically, no hurry is one of the toughest objections to deal with. Since getting prospects interested

enough to take action *today* is a major objective, I'll deal with this objection throughout the book.

The "Bride" Close

Here's one effective technique for getting people off dead center. Early in my sales career I learned to agree with the prospect, and it has been very productive for me. Here's the way it works. If I was making little or no progress after making a substantial effort to persuade the prospect to take action, I would smile and say, "You know, Mr. Prospect, as I review your situation and think back on my own experiences in life, I believe that perhaps you are right. Maybe you should wait. I know in my own life, when my wife and I got married, we made a financial mistake. Getting married costs money, and any time you spend money you might well be making a mistake.

"For example, had we waited just twenty more years, we could truly have had a honeymoon to end all honeymoons! When we started our family, it was a mistake. It did—and does—cost money. Had we waited just another ten or fifteen years, we could have given the children so much more. When we bought our first house, that was a mistake. Had we waited another twenty or thirty years, we truly could have built a much nicer home. The only problem, Mr. Prospect, with waiting until everything is just right before you take action is that you might wind up like the two people in this poem":

> The bride, white of hair, is stooped over her cane,
> Her footsteps—uncertain—need guiding.
> While down the opposite church aisle with a wan, toothless smile
> The bridegroom in wheelchair comes riding.
> Now who is this elderly couple, thus wed?
> Well, you'll find when you've closely explored it
> That here is that rare, most conservative pair
> Who waited "till they could afford it!"
>
> From *Timid Salesmen Have Skinny Kids* by Judge Ziglar

After the poem I would pause and quietly say, "Mr. Prospect, there is seldom a 'perfect' time to do anything, and if you wait until all the lights are on green before you head for town, you're going to stay at home the rest

of your life! The Chinese say that a journey of a thousand leagues begins with a single step. You and I both know that ownership of this product begins with the decision to own it. Actually, the only decision you need to make at this moment is whether or not you can handle this first payment, and you've already indicated the first payment is no problem. Since you want it, *can you think of any reason you should not, at this moment, treat you and your family as well as you deserve to be treated?*"

The "Alternate of Choice" Close

In direct sales, smile and ask, "Shall I ask the company to ship it as soon as possible, or would two weeks be better?" In store or service-center sales, smile and ask, "Would you like to take it with you, or should we send it out?" (Never give the prospect a choice between something and nothing. Let them choose between something and something else.)

They Buy—If They Really Want It

Then there's the fourth reason a lot of people don't buy from you: *They do not really want what you are selling.* Most salespeople—and that certainly includes me—find it inconceivable that *anybody* would not want what they're selling. And that's good! If you did not feel that way, I can assure you that with few exceptions you would not be a successful salesperson. (If you're selling caskets, we're going to "need" one eventually but most people will not "want" one at that moment.)

Your belief in your product should be so strong it would be impossible for you to understand how anybody could possibly *not* want what you're selling! Realistically, however, some people don't. When we deal with refusal and rejection, you will be given the details on how to handle this so you will understand that the prospect has refused your *offer* and has not rejected you personally.

The “Now or Never” Close

When I think of desire, I think of an incident which happened to me early in my sales career. I had demonstrated a set of cookware for a widow living in the little town of Elgin, South Carolina. After I finished the demonstration, she asked the price. When I told her, she acted as if she were going to have a heart attack! She loudly moaned, “Oh, I could never buy that cookware! Why, Mr. Ziglar,” she said, “I’m a widow. I live by myself. Every morning I eat breakfast with my son and his wife who live in the little house next door. I have lunch at the mill and I don’t eat any dinner. I work six days a week. The only time I would really use that set of cookware would be on Sunday.” She continued, “I’m getting close to retirement age. The only thing I’m going to have is Social Security, which is not much. It would be the most foolish thing in the world for me to even consider buying that set of cookware!”

She gave me every reason in the world for not buying. Then she looked at me and, giving me one of the most beautiful smiles I’ve ever seen, said, “But you know, Mr. Ziglar, all of my life I’ve wanted a nice set of pots. And if I don’t order now I know I’ll never have them. I’ll take them!”

She had given me every reason for not buying. Then she bought because she had that lifetime desire to own a really nice, matched set of cookware. Coupled with that desire for ownership was the very real fear that if she didn’t “buy now” she would *never* have the cookware, which meant she would have missed or “lost” something very important to her. It’s a psychological fact that “the fear of loss is greater than the desire for gain.”

The only part I played in this scenario was to be in the right place at the right time with the right product. In addition, I kept quiet while she was voicing her objections. This made her feel better and helped her “talk herself” into buying.

Until that moment I thought I believed in the set of cookware I was selling. My meeting with this widow who had dreamed of ownership made it crystal clear to me how important belief and the desire for ownership really are. How sad it would be for you and the prospect to miss a sale because your own belief and desire to help the prospect own your product is not at least as intense and deep as that of the prospect.

They Buy—If They Trust

The fifth reason the prospect does not buy is the most significant: *no trust.* This one is very difficult to pinpoint and identify with certainty because very few people are going to say specifically, "Look, friend, you know you're lying to me. Why don't you go ahead and admit it? You know your product won't do all the things you're claiming."

It's highly unlikely that the prospect will *call* you a liar, but if they *think* or *feel* you are lying, the results will be the same. They won't buy. In most cases that feeling of distrust is slight—very slight, but if it's there at all, it could—and probably will—cost you the sale.

According to a study conducted by the New York Sales and Marketing Club, 71 percent of the people who buy from you do so because they like you, trust you, and respect you. The word *trust* includes "us." A bond must be formed between you and the prospect before anything significant will be bought or sold.

You've got to establish that trust and respect with your prospects if you expect to be a sales professional. This should be obvious, but in case it's not, I'll spell it out. Again, *you cannot be one kind of person and another kind of salesperson. You must be consistent in all areas of life if you are going to achieve maximum results in building your sales career.* That's one of the major reasons we deal with the entire person rather than just the *sales*person throughout this book. This is one of the "not-so-little" things that make the buying difference in the prospect's mind.

Based on *overwhelming* evidence (the Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance study; the Harvard University study by Dr. Robert Coles; *Corporate Bigamy* by Mortimer Feinberg and Richard Dempewolff; The Forum Corporation Report; The Cox Report; and others), the feeling is strong that corporate America will progressively and *quickly* move toward giving preferential treatment to those job applicants who have a solid moral integrity base on which to build a career. That's *any* kind of legitimate career, but especially a sales career.

A persuasive but immoral salesperson can smooth-talk a lot of people into wanting and buying cheap or useless merchandise or services at inflated prices. When that happens, we have not one, not two, but three losers.

The customer loses money and a certain amount of faith in mankind. The salesman loses self-respect and sacrifices any possibility of a truly successful sales career for temporary financial gain. The profession of selling loses prestige and the confidence of the general public when any of its members betray public trust by using professional persuasion skills in the deceitful practice of selling inferior merchandise at inflated prices to gullible, uninformed, or misinformed buyers.

It is my *strong* conviction that your sales career, or for that matter your career in anything, started when you reached the age of accountability. If integrity is as much a part of you as your head, then success in selling will be much easier and faster, and it will be solid and long lasting. That's the reason I will repeatedly emphasize that *the most important part of the sales process is the salesperson.*

4

Credibility

The Key to a Sales Career

Our tastes and wants are similar. Salespeople the world over are inclined to say, “Yeah, but my situation is different, my prospects are different, my product is different.” That may be true, but there are a tremendous number of similarities, and I believe you will convince yourself of that fact by playing a little game and answering these questions as I ask them:

1. Stop reading and hold up three fingers of your writing hand.
2. Think of a flower and don’t change your mind.
3. Now think of a piece of furniture.
4. Think of a color.
5. Think of a number between one and ten.

Answers

1. The odds are overwhelming that you held up all but your thumb and little finger (96 percent do).
2. Chances are nearly even that you thought of a rose.
3. Chances are one in three that you thought of a chair.
4. With dozens to choose from, chances are over 60 percent that you selected red.
5. Chances are nearly one in four that you thought of seven.

What I am saying is this: There are a tremendous number of similarities in our habits and our way of thinking as people. There are also many similarities in what all our prospects—regardless of what they do or where

they live—want out of life. One thrust of this book is to deal with, and take advantage of, those similarities so we can persuade other people to act in their own best interests.

My good friend and fellow sales trainer John Hammond teaches salespeople to stand up, put their hands on their shoulders, and sweep away that little sales-killing devil who is whispering in their ears, "Your situation is *different* so this doesn't apply to you."

I encourage you to do literally the same thing. These methods and techniques are not on trial. They work when you *master* them and use them.

The "Law of Averages"

Unlike most sales trainers, I will have very little to say about the "law of averages." Chances are excellent you have been told by your sales manager almost from the beginning that if you see enough people you will make some sales. "Yes, sir," you were told, "the 'law of averages' will take care of you! You make those calls and you will make those sales." I was even told that you could take an order pad, tie it to a dog's tail, and if he ran around town long enough somebody would stop him and sign the order! I'm certain the author of that statement knew it was an exaggeration, but it makes the point that calls produce sales and no calls produce no sales. So far I agree.

Overall, the law of averages is dependable, but on occasion it is misleading. For example, if you put one foot in a bucket of ice water and one foot in a bucket of boiling water, on the average you will not be comfortable. And obviously, you can drown in a lake which has an "average" depth of six inches.

My good friend and colleague Mike Frank, who has made, by actual count, over nineteen thousand "warm" calls (negative folks call them "cold" calls), points out that the key to dealing successfully with averages is to (1) make *enough* calls or presentations; (2) be as effective as possible on every call; and (3) make mental and/or written notes on every call as to what you did right, what you could have done better, and how you can make your next presentation even more effective.

The “Next One” Close

I’m convinced that salespeople all over the world—including you—are not interested in the law of averages. Question: What would you like to have happen on your next sales interview? You would like to make a sale, wouldn’t you? What about the one after that? And the one after that?

The point is clear, isn’t it? You don’t care a thing about the law of averages! You probably don’t want *all* the sales, but you do want the next one. This book was written to help you make that next sale, and to make it in such a way that your new customer is willing and even anxious to help you build your sales career.

How do you make the sale to the person you deal with next? In my judgment, you start and finish with trust on most sales you make and on *all* the cliff-hangers (the tough ones). While I will continue to deal with no need, no money, no hurry, and no desire, trust and credibility will get a considerable amount of space in this book.

Credibility Is Critical

Here’s an example of why I said we would be dealing with the kind of person you are as well as the kind of salesperson you are. I don’t mean to upset or offend you, but I can teach the average twelve-year-old many of the techniques and procedures you know and use in sales interviews. However, at this stage of the game, he would not be very effective in selling most of the products you sell.

Here’s why: Can you imagine a twelve-year-old saying to a prospect, “Now, Mr. and Mrs. Anderson, our market analysis reveals that the average sales price of the homes in this area for the past twelve months is $196,500. However, our projections convince me that the current trend of the market as well as the movement of the city will give us an average increase in value of 11 percent in this area for the next nine years, which simply . . .”?

Can you imagine a twelve-year-old spouting that kind of stuff and having a prospect sitting there saying, “Yeah, that’s right, young man, I believe I’ll buy that $196,500 house you showed me yesterday”? It’s not that the

prospect wouldn't believe him, but there's an area of credibility which leaves something to be desired, is there not?

Now an even more serious credibility gap exists if you, an adult, are not the right kind of person. In a nutshell, if you have a character defect, if your integrity is deficient, you will miss a lot of the close ones. (The prospect's *fear of loss is greater than their desire for gain*, and most prospects know that *you can't make a good deal with a bad guy.*) Your product or service has to have overwhelming advantages in order for you to sell successfully with a shortage of integrity. Even then the success is temporary, because a company smart enough to acquire product advantage is too smart to throw that advantage away with character-defective salespeople.

Kevin's Xponential Insight #1: Character Counts

Zig probably had one of the best characters of anybody around him; the integrity he had was second to none. He knew this firsthand: closing really starts with who you are. What's new today is that with the rise of internet and social media and instant information, if you don't have the right character, the word gets out pretty quickly.

People who didn't have the right character twenty, thirty, or forty years ago might have been able to get away with it for a while. But not in the world of Twitter and trending topics. What if a product's not any good? Low stars, bad Yelp reviews, terrible comment after terrible comment. If you aren't running an honest ship and displaying tremendous character across the board, people *will* find out. Selling on quality is a much more steadfast and enduring way to sell.

Did you know QVC stands for Quality, Value, and Convenience? In fact, they have a system of five stars for all the products that go on the air. If you aren't reaching a certain level of performance (about three stars or above), they yank you off the air. They just don't put up with it: you're done. It could be a faulty product or service. It could even be an over-promising salesperson. If customers aren't receiving what they think they're being sold, you're off the air. If you want a stellar, long-standing selling reputation, it's critical to have character in your presentation and quality in your product or service.

Psychology (Common Sense) Is Involved

This is not a book on psychology, but I can absolutely guarantee you that you're going to have to know some psychology (or common sense) if you're going to be a truly professional salesperson. One theme which will repeatedly be emphasized is this:

> You can have everything in life you want if you will just help enough other people get what they want.

Let me emphasize that if you have ever closed even one sale, I'm not going to be teaching you *how* to close. You already know how to do that. What I would like to do is *improve* your percentage of closes in the interviews, presentations, or demonstrations you conduct. You can improve your closing percentage by understanding three very important things. Number one: good closing comes from good selling and good selling comes from good people. (Question: Are you "good people"?) Number two: this book is designed to help you develop what I call a "closing instinct." Number three: you will learn many specific new closes.

This instinct or intuition, which women have developed to a much finer point than men, is important in selling and can be developed by men and women. When your prospect gives you those buying signals indicating they are on the verge of making that *yes* decision, you need to move in instinctively and become the "assistant buyer" we will be talking about. You need to assist them in solving their problem, which they can do by buying your products, goods, or services.

If you could improve your closing percentage by 10 percent (and I'm confident that if your closing percentage is less that 60 percent, 10 percent is a realistic figure), your additional volume would be substantial, or your time for other pursuits would be dramatically increased.

For example, if you are in direct sales and talk with twenty people each week or one thousand people each year, an increase of 10 percent would be one hundred more sales. The additional volume and earnings would make a real difference in your lifestyle, and your cost of doing business would be almost the same. A 10 percent increase in your closing percentage *could* increase your *net* income 20 percent if you currently close 50 percent of your interviews and 100 percent if you are closing only 10 percent of your interviews.

If you improve your effectiveness 10 percent, the other one hundred sales would represent five solid weeks of work without spending any additional time on the job. This could mean that you would have five extra weeks to do the things you enjoy doing or to prepare yourself professionally to move higher up the ladder with your company. It obviously could also mean additional time with your family, which in our society today is needed more and more and is a *must* if you expect to achieve total success.

There's More to It Than Closing

As we talk about closes, I would like to emphasize something which I consider tremendously important. For some reason, the close has gotten to be the "glamour" part of the sales process. Many people labor under the illusion that if they can just master the right closing technique they can dramatically improve their productivity. Obviously, it would help sales to know how to close and to use those techniques. However, I would like to say that *the close is no more, or less, important than any other phase of the sales process.*

If you don't have a prospect, how are you going to close? If you don't know how to make an appointment, how are you going to close? If your qualification process or presentation is weak, regardless of how many closes you use, in our sophisticated society you're not going to be able to "pressure" many people into buying. If you do, you will have a cancellation, or even worse, a disgruntled customer. So, in reality, the close is *one* part of the process. Since it is the final part, it has been given a disproportionate burden to carry as far as the sale is concerned. My saying this might puzzle you a bit because of the title and structure of this book. But I simply want to keep things in perspective; you must be effective in all phases of the sales process if you're going to build a rewarding sales career.

I have frequently had salespeople say they could get prospects, secure appointments, and tell a good story, but couldn't close the sale. Interpretation: *They can't sell.* As John M. Wilson of National Cash Register fame would say, "There is no such thing as a good salesman who is a poor closer." Another trainer put it this way: "Selling without closing is like lathering without shaving." Friend, if you can't close, you can't sell. *Period.*

When you get a *qualified prospect*, you're on first base. When you make the *appointment*, you're on second base. When you make an *effective presentation*, you're on third base. If you go no further, all you've done is *waste* the time of the prospect as well as your own. Until you move to *home plate with the close*, you haven't done anything constructive for anyone.

In selling, as in baseball, you must touch *all* the bases. Even if the batter knocks the ball out of the park, if they don't touch every base, they won't score.

The close, to continue the analogy, is the score, and it is important because it converts *invested* time to *profitable* time. I insist that the close is no more important than any other phase of the sales process; however, without the close the rest of the process is wasted.

Closing is largely an attitude firmly grounded in solid sales technique. That's the reason so much space is given to the psychology involved, as well as to your own mental attitude.

"Little" Things Determine Sales Results

In selling it's the little things that make the big difference in making or missing the sale, just as the "little" things make the big difference in all areas of life. Call a girl a kitten and she'll love you. Call her a cat and you've got a problem! Tell your wife she looks like the first day of spring and you score all kinds of points. Tell her she looks like the last day of a long, hard winter and you're in big trouble!

There *is* a difference in results when you have those "little" things working *for* you. Things like a good shine on your shoes; the well-pressed suit, skirt, or dress; the neatness of your hair; whether you are neat and clean-shaven; whether you're smiling and courteous, on time, thoughtful, and considerate of your prospect's time; whether you are organized and practice good human relations with follow-up reminders and thank-you notes—and countless other "little" things that will determine whether you miss or make the sale.

The list is endless, but in the final analysis, more often than not, one or more of the little things communicate to your prospect that you do believe in what you're doing, that you are interested in serving them, and that you do feel you're offering the best product or service at the best price which

will do the most for them and their needs. When all of these things are going for you, the question is not, “Will you succeed?” but rather, “When and how big will that success be?”

When Should You Close?

Many times salespeople ask the question “When should you close?” From the beginning I’ve heard salespeople and sales trainers say: “Close early, close often, close late.” If you’ve been selling for three days, chances are good you’ve also heard this phrase. In many cases that advice is sound, but there is one glaring exception. You can close or attempt to close too early and lose any real chance of making the sale later. Question: What or when is “too early”? Answer: Too early is when you attempt to close before you have established in the prospect’s mind significant value for what you are selling.

Prospects, regardless of the product you sell, always *buy the benefits your product has for them.* In short, when you convince the prospect that your product scratches where they itch, they will buy. When you make them “itch” for ownership, they will “scratch” around until they come up with the money.

If you try to close before you establish value, you come across as a high-pressure salesman who wants to make the sale and get on to the next prospect without any real regard for what your present prospect’s needs and desires might be. You will appear to be interested only in what *you* want and this will build a wall between you and the prospect. You must climb this wall before you make the sale, because the prospect sees you in that “high-pressure” light. That’s a tough wall to climb, but if you don’t climb it, your career sales register will frequently ring up “no sale.”

It is perfectly permissible to inform the prospect early in the interview that you are going to ask for an order. Here’s a specific example: When I was in the life insurance business we followed a two-appointment sales process. The first appointment involved getting background information on the prospect and exploring their projected future needs as far as retirement and protection for their family were concerned (that’s qualifying the prospect). When I went back for the second appointment (with the

proposal), I made the complete presentation, established value, and *then* attempted to close the sale.

The "Fair Enough" Close

I started the second interview by taking out the rather elaborate proposal along with a clean sheet of paper. I would hold the blank sheet of paper, look at the prospect, and say, "Mr. Prospect, as you can plainly see, this is a blank sheet of paper. Because there is nothing written on it, there is nothing to understand or to misunderstand. I also have your proposal, which is quite elaborate. This proposal was prepared exclusively for you, and frankly, it is quite detailed. However, Mr. Prospect, I would like to make you a promise.

"I'm going to keep the explanation of the proposal just as simple and clear as this blank sheet of paper. If I fail to do so, I will understand if you are reluctant to make a decision concerning the proposal. For this reason, I promise you that when I finish the explanation, the proposal will be just as clear and just as simple as the blank sheet of paper. At that point, I am going to ask you to make a decision. If you see that it is in your best interests to say yes to the proposal, I'm going to ask you to say yes. If, however, you think it is in your best interests to say no, then I am simply going to ask you to say no. *Is that fair enough, Mr. Prospect?*"

An interesting thing happened on the way to the bank. My closing percentage improved approximately 10 percent, but my volume of business increased even more because I eliminated, or dramatically reduced, the number of repeat calls, giving me more time to see new prospects.

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Commonsense Selling

Prospects won't "change" their minds. Think about this. When the customer says no, the odds are at least a hundred to one you're never going to be able to get them to change their mind. Now I know what you're thinking, but I'll say it again. When a prospect says no, the odds are at least a hundred to one you're not going to be able to get them to *change* their mind.

At this point you're thinking, "Now, Ziglar, up until now I've felt you were pretty much on target, but we're going to part company on this one, because most of the business I get comes after the prospect says, 'No, no, no, no.' " I don't doubt for a moment that you are right.

The "New Decision" Close

I asked that Redhead of mine (she is a "decided" redhead, meaning that one day she just decided to be a redhead!) to marry me and she said no. I asked her the second time; she said no. Third time, no. Fourth time, no. Fifth time, no. Sixth time, yes. No, she did not change her mind. What she did was very simple. She made a *new* decision based on *new* information which produced a new *feeling*.

Before you can get a prospect to *change* their mind, you've first got to get them to admit they were wrong, that they made a mistake when they said no. Well, friend, let me ask you a question. How many times in the last twelve months have *you* admitted that *you* were wrong, that *you* made a mistake? Another question: If it's tough for you to admit you were wrong,

how are you going to get your prospect to admit they were wrong, that they made a mistake? That will be even tougher, won't it?

When a prospect says no, and you say in one form or another, "Awwwww, go ahead, you know you're going to buy it sooner or later—sign here," all you're doing—in the prospect's mind—is trying to high-pressure them into saying they were wrong, that they were foolish to say no to begin with. Getting a prospect to admit their "mistake" borders on the impossible. All you'll do is irritate or antagonize your prospect. That is *not* the way to persuade them to buy from you.

No Often Means They Don't Know

No, the prospect won't change their mind, but they will be delighted to make a *new* decision, based on *new* information. Example: "Why didn't you tell me the property was outside the city limits and I won't have to pay city taxes?" They're in the process of making a *new decision* based on new information. "Why didn't you tell me we could print on both sides of the paper? Even though it's a little more expensive per sheet, it saves us money because we double the usage." They're making a *new decision* based on new information.

Since prospects will make new decisions based on new information, the sales process demands that you try for the close as soon as you have established value or aroused desire for ownership, but before you give all the information. If you wait until you've given all the information before you try to close, that would be an even more serious mistake. Some prospects automatically say no on the first attempt to close so that they won't feel they were "easy"—and that they didn't carefully investigate before they bought. More importantly, they fear they will look foolish if they make a fast decision which turns out to be wrong. Many times these prospects who initially say no are actually saying, "Tell me more. Give me more information. Make me feel *secure* that a *yes* decision is the *right* decision. In short, make it easier for me to buy." Your job as a salesperson is to do exactly that—make it easier for the prospect to buy.

How Much You Pay

As a buyer, my reading friend, let me ask you a question. Would you give a salesperson one hundred dollars for a product or service that in your mind you knew was worth no more than fifty dollars? Yes _____ No _____ Obviously, the answer is no, isn't it? Second question: When you negotiate with a prospect, do you honestly believe they will give you one hundred dollars for something which they definitely feel is worth only fifty dollars? Yes _____ No _____ Third question. Back to you: Suppose the salesperson uses ten of their best, most effective, most powerful sales closes on you. Under those circumstances, would you give them one hundred dollars for a product you positively felt was worth only fifty dollars? Yes _____ No _____ I'll bet the answer is still no. Actually, that's a ridiculous question, isn't it?

Fourth question: Suppose the salesperson got emotional about it, sent you on a guilt trip, and insisted that you ought to buy to help them, their family, or someone else? Then would you give them a hundred dollars for a product which you knew was worth only fifty dollars? The answer is still no, isn't it?

Why the Prospect Says No

When a prospect says no, either they are saying that they do not have the money—and all the sales expertise in the world will not generate that—or they are saying, "I am not about to give you more for the product or service than I feel the product or service is worth."

The point is simple. When you use pressure on a prospect and persist in your efforts to get them to buy, all you're doing is antagonizing them or turning the prospect off. When a prospect says no, chances are excellent that in their mind they simply do not feel the product—*for them*—is worth the price you're asking.

Now in most cases *you can't significantly change or lower the price, but you can dramatically change the value.* But to change that value, you have to give additional information about your goods or services. This generally involves trust and good communication between the prospect and salesperson. With this in mind, a truly professional and effective procedure

must include showing how you can raise the value of the product in the mind of the prospect. That's one of the purposes of *Secrets of Closing the Sale*.

> Each close you use should be an educational process by which you are able to raise the value of the product or service in the prospect's mind.

Closes Should Be Educational

The minute the value equals the price, you have a prospect. Until the value equals or exceeds the price, *in the prospect's mind* you do not have a legitimate prospect. All the technique, persuasion, and pressure are going to be to no avail.

Once the value of the product or service, in the prospect's mind, exceeds the price, you have a "hot" prospect *whom you still must close.*

Please remember that you still have to deal with the fear factor in the prospect's mind—the fear they will be making a mistake if they go ahead and say yes, even though they can see that the value of your offer exceeds the price you ask. This is the reason I constantly stress that the salesperson and their personal integrity will be the determining factor in closing many, many sales. What I'm really saying is that if you are the right kind of person, selling the right product, using the right technique on the prospect with the right motive, then your chances of selling your product or service are dramatically increased.

Don't Oversell

One real danger we encounter as salespeople is that sometimes in our exuberance in the presentation, or in our frustration, we attempt close after close with no results. The tendency to oversell on these occasions simply overwhelms some of the weaker salespeople whose integrity is suspect or whose interest is primarily in immediate profit rather than in building a long-term sales career.

Overselling by Omission

Back in 1974 I completed one of my dreams, which was to have a really nice office at home for my research and writing. Part of my dream included a genuine leather sofa.

I had vivid memories of trips as a small boy in Yazoo City, Mississippi, to Dr. C. L. Wallace's dental office. In his outer office was an old leather sofa. I still recall sitting on that sofa, squeezing the armrest and getting quite a charge out of the "squish." There is nothing that "squishes" quite like real leather, and I wanted that squish in my new office.

The Redhead and I went shopping at a major store in town with an enormous inventory. The salesman pleasantly approached us, we conveyed our wishes, and he led us to the sofa department. When we saw the first leather sofa that appealed to me, I asked the price. He told me, and I was pleasantly shocked because it was only about half as much as I had anticipated. When I expressed my shock and delight that a genuine leather sofa could be bought at that price, the salesman assured me that it was indeed a remarkable buy and that was one of the reasons they sold so many of them.

I sat down on the sofa and leaned back. It felt really good. I squeezed the armrest and the "squish" was there. I stood up and walked around the sofa, admiring it. It was truly beautiful and again I expressed my delight in finding a leather sofa at such a bargain price. Once again the salesman commented that yes, it was a real bargain and a big seller for them. At this point I told the salesman I would take it.

Next I told the salesman we needed a nice coffee table to set in front of the sofa, so we headed for the coffee table department. On the way we passed another leather sofa, very similar to the one I had just agreed to buy. If anything, I liked this one slightly better, so I walked over, looked it over carefully, sat down, leaned back, and was a little undecided as to which one I truly liked the best. So I asked the price. The salesman told me and again I was shocked, because this one was nearly twice the price of the one I had just ordered. I asked the obvious question: "Why does this one cost almost twice as much?" He explained it in one simple sentence: "This one is *all* leather."

Zig: "Well, friend, what is that one I just ordered made of? I was under the impression it was all leather." Salesman: "It *is* all leather—where the

human body comes in contact with the sofa. The tops of the cushions, the armrests, and the part you lean back against are all genuine leather. However, underneath the armrest, underneath the sofa, and the entire back of the sofa are Naugahyde." He quickly assured me, however, that no one would ever know the difference, pointing out that even I had not detected the difference. He also assured me that the Naugahyde would last just as long as the leather and look just as good.

Zig: "Friend, why didn't you tell me to begin with that the one I ordered is not all leather?" Salesman: "I intended to, but somehow the conversation always changed—but I was going to tell you before you left, because I'm not the kind of salesman who would mislead anyone."

Question to you, dear reader: Which one of the sofas do you think I bought, or do you figure I walked out without buying anything? If you figured I walked out without buying anything, you hit the nail on the head. Not only did I not buy anything that day, I have never been back in the store.

You might reasonably ask: If he had told me the full story to begin with, would I have bought the sofa? The answer is no, I would not have bought the one which was part Naugahyde. All my life I wanted a real leather sofa, and I had just completed a beautiful office exactly like I wanted. Under no circumstances would I have compromised on that sofa. Would I have bought the more expensive leather one? Probably not on the *first* visit, because it was quite expensive. However, I would have shopped around and, based on what I found in the marketplace, I *probably* would have bought the more expensive one. At any rate, I can assure you I would have been back in the store long before now looking for other items.

The point is a very simple one: By omission, the salesman lied to me. It was abundantly clear that I thought the first sofa was all leather. When he did not set the record straight, he misled me. When I saw the real leather sofa and expressed interest in it, perhaps he visualized doubling his sale, but greed or dishonesty cost him a substantial immediate sale and eliminated any chance for future sales.

It's a trite statement, but it's more true than trite that honesty is not just the best policy—it's the only policy for those salespeople who expect to build a solid sales career.

Lesson: Don't lie or mislead by omission.

Closing Is Not Natural

Of all the skills we acquire, perhaps none is less natural than the skill of the closer. This is especially true for those of us who are part of another generation, and to a degree this is still true today. Almost from birth we have been told not to ask for everything we see or want. As children we were told that asking wasn't nice and indicated concern only for self. We were conditioned to wait until things were offered.

However, when we entered the world of selling, we were repeatedly told to ask for the order, to encourage the prospect to buy. Since the salesperson obviously benefits from the sale, it appeared to be a selfish move on our part. That's one reason I included the persuasion analogy, using Aristotle and Galileo as an example. This example, along with countless others, makes the point that *you are being selfish, or at least unconcerned, when you don't ask for the order,* because, as previously stated, *the customer is the biggest winner in an ethical sales transaction.*

Again, closing is a *learned* skill and not a *natural* one. Fortunately, once your thinking is sound and clear on the matter, a high degree of skill can be acquired, provided you're willing to make the effort.

Some Commonsense Psychology from a Psychiatrist

My psychiatrist friend, the late John Kozek of Dunedin, Florida, designed his beautiful home and was the architect and contractor. He was up in the cathedral ceiling working and was covered with dust and perspiration and talking to the crew in Greek. In walked a factory representative of a window company. As the man stood on the floor far below, John called a greeting to him in English. "He ignored me, thinking I was 'only a laborer,'" he said. The salesman went over to Maria (Mrs. Kozek) and started to tell her about stained-glass windows, but she told him he would have to talk to her husband. The representative said he would be glad to. She responded that he'd already missed his chance, and the salesman looked puzzled. Then Maria pointed up at the scaffold where John was working.

John suggested that I warn all salespeople to "be nice to everyone, because you don't always know who you're talking to." That's good advice

from Dr. Kozek.

Cindy Took the Advice

While making a cosmetics sale in Sakowitz Department Store, Cindy Oates (who just happens to be my daughter) noticed a customer waiting to be served. Normally when a customer shows up at the cosmetics counter, the salesladies immediately converge on them, but this man wasn't the standard Sakowitz customer. He was wearing run-down loafers and the holes in his socks extended well up over his heels. His hair was greasy and his clothes were dirty and literally hung on his bony frame. All in all he looked (to the idle clerks standing nearby) like he didn't "belong" at the cosmetics counter of a ritzy department store—especially at the Erno Laszlo cosmetics counter—so he was ignored. (Somebody forgot that you shouldn't judge a book by its cover!)

Two things prompted Cindy to quickly and courteously move over to the prospect. Number one, she is a gracious lady (that's an unbiased fact) who is truly a professional salesperson committed to giving *everyone* who approaches the counter a chance to get what they want and need. Number two, she noticed that the man had a piece of paper in his hand. To her that meant he was a husband with a list of things he was going to buy for his wife. She was right on the button. The list was short—just three items—but the sale was nearly a hundred dollars, the equivalent of nearly three hundred dollars today. The purchase was completed in a matter of minutes and the man was extremely nice, with beautiful manners.

That book's cover (the man's appearance) wasn't very good, but his pocketbook was in excellent shape. Later on in this book I talk a lot about the "Assumptive" Close or attitude. For the moment I urge you to *assume* that everyone you approach is a good prospect with a real problem (need) which you can solve. Be nice to them. *All* of them. You've got nothing to lose and a lot to gain.

Selling Is like Playing Golf

To be most effective in a sales presentation, you should lead off with your very best shot, your Sunday punch, the one you feel has the most persuasiveness and the most power. Save your second-best shot for the final effort. Generally speaking, your prospect hears the beginning and the ending but often does not hear what's in the middle. This procedure helps ensure that your prospect is going to remember the two most powerful parts of your presentation. So if you've got to choose what they hear, you certainly want to choose the most persuasive information you have.

Underneath all of this is the fact that *your prospect is not going to buy cold, hard facts. They are going to buy warm people benefits.* You also want to remember that selling is like playing golf. In golf, if you're going to score well and win, you must make every shot so you will be in position to make the next one. However, you must remember that if you don't make *this* shot (sale) it doesn't make much difference what position you're in, because you might not have a chance to make the next one.

If you miss too many sales, you're going to be broke and out of business, so first things first. Concentrate on making this sale, but concentrate on making it in such a way that you'll be in position to make the next one. That's career-building selling.

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Voice Training to Close Sales

Using digital recorders. Beyond any reasonable doubt, if you're going to build your sales career to the fullest, you've got to do something that 95 percent of all salespeople never do. They never deliberately train themselves how to use their voices more effectively or do any work toward developing voice inflection and voice modulation. This chapter is devoted to selling you on the importance of utilizing your voice and offers specific suggestions of how you can train your voice to improve your sales effectiveness.

In order to develop your voice, let's consider the digital voice recorder or the recording function on your smartphone and how either tool can be utilized to develop your voice. You should record not only your presentation but also the way you handle objections and close the sale. Then you should listen several times to what you have said and the way you said it.

You're going to be amazed to discover that, your effectiveness notwithstanding, much of what you say is superfluous (you talk too much) and you often speak in a monotone. If it is possible to record your sales call in front of a "live" prospect, I encourage you to do so. If this is not possible, you should definitely record your presentation (role-playing with someone else) in a training-room environment. In either event, you will be shocked at the nonanswers you give to questions and objections, and the number of times you heard what the prospect *said* but missed what they were *saying*.

Would You Buy from You? Record your presentation, listen to it, and then ask yourself: "If I were calling on me and made that presentation, would I be able to persuade me to take action on the offer?" Many times when I talk to people about recording their presentation, they say, "Yeah, but, Zig, I don't *sound* that way. That person on that recorder, that's not

me!" Well, friend, I've got news for you—it *is* you! Admittedly, there will be some distortion, but the distortion is not nearly as much as you think.

Voice Inflection Changes Meaning

To demonstrate what you can do with your voice, I'm going to take one sentence which has eight words in it and make those eight words mean eight different things. Take the sentence (1) "I did not say he stole the money." That's a simple, factual statement. (2) "*I* did not say he stole the money" implies that it was said, but by someone else. (3) "I *DID NOT* say he stole the money" is a vigorous denial that you said it. (4) "I did not *SAY* he stole the money" hints that you might have *implied* it, but you didn't *say* it. (5) "I did not say *HE* stole the money" implies that someone other than the accused stole the money.

You could also make it say, (6) "I did not say he *STOLE* the money." Here you hint that the accused might have "borrowed" the money but didn't actually steal it. (7) "I did not say he stole *THE* money" implies that he might have stolen *some* money but not *THE* money. (8) "I did not say he stole the *MONEY*" suggests that he might have stolen *something*, but certainly not the money. They are the same words, but with an educated change in your voice inflection, you can make those eight words say eight different things.

The "Voice Inflection" Close

The exciting thing is the fact that voice inflection is a *skill* you can learn. It's not as easy as it might appear, but in just fifteen minutes a day for ten days you will have mastered the fundamentals. In my judgment, *voice inflection is the most important single undeveloped skill you need to concentrate on in your pursuit of professional sales excellence.*

You start to learn voice inflection by taking your digital recorder or smartphone and practicing that one sentence. Once you have recorded it the first time, listen and see if you accomplished your objective. If not, try it again and again until you have recorded it exactly as you want. Go through

the entire sequence until you can make those eight words say eight different things. Don't be disappointed or discouraged if it takes you two, three, four, or a dozen times to get it right.

Once you are satisfied that it is right, give it the acid test. Record the eight words with the voice inflection covering the eight different areas. Let your mate or an associate listen and see if they can pick out what you are communicating. Keep practicing until someone else understands clearly what you are saying. Now the groundwork is solidly laid for you to re-record your sales presentation and procedures. Be certain to save the first recording, because you will see a definite improvement in the recording—and more importantly, in the sales results.

I will return to voice inflection several times, and I hope and believe that by the time we are finished, the proper use of your voice will be one of the skills you will be committed to acquire.

Remember—you bought this book to become more professional, so if you're serious, you will follow the suggestions we are making. You are not *trying* something. You are using something that has been tried and proven by thousands of people who have learned the technique in our seminars or training materials.

Final thought. Using voice inflection and change of pace helps to hold your prospect's attention. That's important, because if they aren't listening, they won't get the message and the information necessary to make the *yes* decision. Under these circumstances, they will be compelled to say no and both of you will lose.

Dealing with the Price Objection

Now let's cover one major objection that can be more effectively handled by properly using your voice. This objection is encountered by virtually every salesperson many times during the course of their sales career: All of us encounter, on a regular basis, the prospect who suggests directly or indirectly that the price is a little out of line or that the product is ridiculously and unreasonably overpriced.

One prospect might belligerently and dogmatically say, "THAT PRICE IS RIDICULOUS!" Another prospect might gently, even smilingly, say, "Well, it seems to me that the price is a little [pause] out of line." I've even

had folks put it in exquisite colloquial terms: “You folks kinda proud of that stuff you sell, ain’t cha?”

You Justify or They Defend

To the one who is dogmatic and says, “THAT PRICE IS RIDICULOUS!” you repeat, almost verbatim, what he said: “The price [pause] is *ridiculous*?” (Your voice inflection should make it sound like a question.) Inflection is important because in this example you are, as one of my mentors, the late Charlie Cullen, would have said, “audaciously” challenging the prospect. You’re creating a situation that forces them to defend their statement instead of you justifying the price. There’s quite a difference. One puts you on the defense and the other puts you on the offense. The difference in results is substantial.

It’s simple but not easy. I challenge you to get your digital recorder, use the same words, and carefully listen to what you’ve said. Chances are excellent you’re going to have to repeat the process a dozen, maybe even twenty times to get your voice inflection just right. Trouble? Yes. Work? Yes. Worth it? You betcha!

Suppose the prospect says, “It seems to me the price is a little out of line.” The first thing you’ve got to determine is whether the price really is the problem or there is another issue. You make that determination by asking questions. Sales trainer John Hammond has *successfully* handled thousands of objections by asking: “If there were a way I could show you that the price is more than fair and the product is worth every dime we’re asking, would you go ahead and take advantage of our offer today?”

This forces the prospect to make a commitment based on price when their *real* objection is color, size, style, neighborhood, or something else you could and should identify. If this is the situation, their response is going to be, “Well, no, not really.” Then the salesperson can say, “Then there must be some other reason you are hesitating. Would you mind if I ask what the reason is?” *This is a superb procedure for smoking out the real objection.*

If price *is* the objection, you continue in this way. You: “Let me ask you, Mr. Prospect, do you like the product?” Many times they’ll respond, “Yes, I like the product, but it seems to me that the price is . . . a little out of line.” You (softly and gently): “Mr. Prospect, wouldn’t you agree that it’s difficult

to pay *too much* for something you *really* like?" (Now the ball is back in their court.)

Many times, if it's a relatively inexpensive item, your prospect might go ahead and invest, since that question, which forces them to think, could also lead them to make a *yes* decision. In most cases, if it's a high-ticket item, they will probably think for a moment and say, "Well, I do like it. But yes, I think you can pay too much regardless of how much you might like it. I know I wouldn't give you a hundred thousand dollars for a Cadillac, even though I might really enjoy having one."

The "Fear of Loss" Close

Now you're dealing with something which is very basic, so let me repeat. *The fear of loss is greater than the desire for gain.* You need to establish in that prospect's mind the fact that they're safe in dealing with you, that they won't lose (either money or "face") by buying from you, but that they will lose (product benefits) if they don't buy from you.

One effective way to do this is to say to the prospect, "Mr. Prospect, you're going to be concerned about price one time. That's the day you buy. You're going to be concerned with quality for the life of the product itself. With this in mind, let me urge you to think along these lines: *Wouldn't you agree that it's better to invest a little more than you expected than a little less than you should?* [Wait for answer.] The reason is simple. If you invest a little more than expected, we are talking about pennies. If you invest less than you should and the product won't do the job which you expected it to do, then you will lose all you have invested."

A quote often attributed to John Ruskin makes an astute observation concerning price: "It is unwise to pay too much, but it's worse to pay too little. When you pay too much, you lose a little money, that is all. When you pay too little, you sometimes lose everything because the thing you bought was incapable of doing what it was bought to do. The common law of business balance prohibits paying a little and getting a lot . . . it can't be done. If you deal with the lowest bidder, it is well to add something for the risk you run, and if you do that then you will have enough to pay for something better." That makes sense, doesn't it?

Kevin's Xponential Insight #2: The Fear of Loss: A Powerful Motivator

If you've ever watched HSN or QVC, you've seen someone bring in a thousand pieces of product and say, "Listen, when it's gone, it's gone. We'll have no more." Think about that. If you are watching and something you're even moderately interested in begins to disappear—all of a sudden eight hundred of them are gone—you're faced with the fear of losing out. Maybe this is your only chance and you'll be left asking, "What if?"

Fear of loss is a powerful technique—and those numbers are real. When there are only two hundred left, you'd better get on the phone, because it might be three to six months before they bring it back—or never. Limited quantities, deadlines, and limited-time offers all create a sense of urgency.

On QVC, for example, a product's first run will be priced at the very lowest it will ever be. That's a rule of the network because they want to give people an incentive to buy now and have the fear of losing of that price point. A beautiful bracelet might be $26.42 that first day but it's going to sell for more next time. The fear of loss is about getting in now, at the lowest price it will ever be. That is game-changing and how one of Zig's secrets is being used every day.

This Is a Bargain?

I believe it would be safe to say that all of us (and that certainly includes yours truly) have been guilty of buying "bargains" in the past. You saw the big sale advertisement on ladies' shoes. There they were—Bruno Magli $250 shoes, special, one-time-only, closeout, inventory reduction, super gigantic, colossal. Never before has such a bargain been offered!

It's obviously more than you can resist. Down you go to the store, slip on those magnificent Bruno Magli shoes, and while it is true that you wear a 6-1/2B and these are 6AA's, you begin to rationalize. They will stretch as you wear them, and though they are most uncomfortable as you struggle to take those five or six convincing steps in the store, and even though you know they really are too tight, the lure of getting such a bargain, saving over one hundred dollars, just overwhelms you. Besides, they are exactly the right color to go with your new dress and purse. (Logically you *know* you should not buy the wrong size, but *emotionally* the lure of such a "bargain" overwhelms you.)

The sale is made. You pay $119.95, and you walk out with a $250 pair of shoes—carrying them, of course. Since they are so beautiful you save them for church on Sunday. As you slip them on and your feet start to scream, your better judgment tells you not to wear them, but you determine to tough it out because, after all, they're so beautiful and such a bargain.

So you do tough it out and you do survive the sermon, though you can't remember a word the preacher said. That's the one and only time you wear those shoes. Almost $120 to wear them one time is a pretty steep price. Wouldn't it have been better to have paid the regular price and gotten your size and worn them for months to come?

Me Too

As the old saying goes, I know how you feel because I've done exactly the same thing. The suit was regularly priced (several years ago) at $279.95, marked down to just $149.95. Though at the time I wore a 44 Regular and this was a 42 Regular, I felt confident I was "going to lose the weight," and in the meantime I could suffer a little for such a beautiful suit. You can finish the story, can't you? That's right. I wore it one time and the moths got to the suit before I lost the weight.

Yep. It would have been better had I invested a little more than expected instead of a little less like I did. On the former a few dollars would have been invested; on the latter I lost the entire purchase price (one wearing cost me $149.95 *plus* tax!).

The same line of thinking can be applied when you persuade your prospects to have their teeth crowned or buy a nicer suit, a better dress, a more powerful truck, a better-built lawn mower, or whatever you are selling. Just remember that when you are attempting to move that prospect into a better product, it *must* be in the prospect's best interests. Otherwise you both will end up losing.

As the late Dick Gardner often said, "Why settle for the 'get by' when in the long run the good costs less?"

The "Cost" Close

Here's a question you ask when your prospect talks about price: "Mr. Prospect, if you could convince yourself [don't *ever* say, 'If *I* could convince you,' because he's not interested in *you* convincing him of *anything*] that the price is more than fair, would you be willing to go ahead with a *yes* decision today?"

If that question gets a yes answer, then you ask the next question, which is a very significant one. You eyeball the prospect and say, "Mr. Prospect, since you are obviously concerned about price, let me make certain we're communicating. Are you really that interested in price, or is it *cost* you're concerned with?" The odds are great that your prospect is going to respond with, "What do you mean, am I talking about price or cost? What is the difference?"

Seeing Is Believing

You: "Well, Mr. Prospect, let me explain it this way." (Now get your "talking pad"[1] ready for use. Prospects are inclined to believe what they *see*. If you write it down, not only are they more likely to believe it, but chances are great they will understand it better as well.) When I talk about price and cost, here's the example I use. (You should get your own example, one that's appropriate and fits your situation.)

"Mr. Prospect, back in 1971 my six-year-old son and I went out to buy a bicycle. We went to the Schwinn Bicycle Shop and were shocked at the $64.95 price tag. Certainly no prudent parent in 1971, when $64.95 represented a lot of money, could justify spending that much money on a bicycle for a six-year-old boy.

"We headed for the discount store. 'After all,' I reasoned, 'he's just going to tear it up learning how to ride, and a cheaper bicycle will be good enough for that.' We invested $34.95 in a bicycle. Much better—price-wise.

"About six weeks later we went back to get a new pair of handlebars. The cost normally would have been $4.50, but the bike was still in warranty so it didn't cost us anything. Sixty days later, when we went back for more handlebars, the bicycle was no longer in warranty, so we had to invest the $4.50. About six weeks later we were back in the bicycle shop because the entire sprocket arrangement had completely collapsed. I've forgotten the exact cost, but it came to $15 and change. A few weeks later we were back

in the shop because the wheel bearings were shot, and they wanted another $5 or $6. At that point I decided there was no way out, so I threw in the towel. Then we bought the Schwinn bicycle at $64.95."

"Cheap" Costs More

"Now let's look at the difference between price and cost. The price of the 'economy' bicycle was $34.95. The price of the Schwinn bicycle was $64.95. Now let's look at cost. The cost of the economy bicycle was $34.95 plus $4.50 plus $15 for a total of $54.45. My son rode that bicycle for six months—not counting the down time.

"The cost of the Schwinn bicycle was $64.95 and he rode it for ten years. It 'cost' us *$9 a month* for my son to ride the 'economy' bicycle. It 'cost' us *$6.50 a year* for him to ride the Schwinn—and it was still a good bicycle when we passed it on to a smaller child. The only money we had to spend on it was for a couple of tires, and that had nothing to do with the durability or the quality of the bicycle."

Note: As you talk you diagram it on your talking pad. This one looks like this:

"Now, Mr. Prospect, let me point this out. The *price* of the economy bicycle was considerably less ($34.95 vs. $64.95), but the *cost* difference was even more ($9 a month vs. $6.50 a year). So, Mr. Prospect, may I ask you again, is it price you're concerned with, or is it cost? Price is a one-time thing; cost is something you are going to be concerned about for as long as you've got the product. (*If* this next sentence is true, you can and should close with it.) Some companies can beat us on price, but, Mr. Prospect, when it comes to cost, we win that battle. Since you are obviously cost-conscious, doesn't it make good sense to immediately start enjoying the lowest possible cost?"

P.S. It goes without saying that you will use an example involving your own product to make this point.

The Price Is Too High

Later on in *Secrets*, I deal at length with the statement that no salesman is "normal" if they are really outstanding. I now extend that to include the buyers, because they are not "normal" either at the time they get ready to sign the agreement. There is demonstrable proof that when a person signs an order for a significant amount of money, in almost every case there is a measurable increase in their pulse rate. A change is taking place and they're going through a process that affects them emotionally. When we become completely aware of the extent of the effect, we will be able to deal more empathetically with the prospect and consequently be more effective as salespeople.

In dealing with a price objection, you must remember that many people will automatically say the price is too high, whether they feel that way or not. This is a method many people use because they think that by using it they'll be able to negotiate a better price.

Here is yet another approach to handling the "price is too high" objection: "I'm glad you're concerned about price, Mr. Prospect, because that's one of our most attractive advantages. Would you agree that, as a practical matter, a product is worth what it can do for you and not what you have to pay for it?" (Wait for answer.) "Starting with that premise, let's take a look at what our product will do for you."

Objection: The price is too high. You: "Mr. Prospect, our company had to make a choice between building our product as cheaply as possible and selling it as a get-by product, or building quality into the product for service, durability, and your long-lasting enjoyment. In short, for long-range value and benefit. With this decision facing us, we tried to put ourselves in your shoes. We felt you would prefer to deal with a company that puts everything possible into its product to make it the best and most useful, rather than a company that uses cheap materials and cheap labor to turn out a get-by product. Most people, Mr. Prospect, and I'll bet that includes you, clearly understand that good things are not cheap and cheap things are seldom good. You do want something you can depend on for good service over the long haul, don't you, Mr. Prospect?"

Prospect Forgets Price—but Remembers Quality

As we explore cost and offer suggestions and instructions on the most effective way to use your voice and deal with price in this chapter, it's almost like killing a fly with a sledgehammer, since we give you so many details on this one point. However, it is important and will become even more important in the future, so the objective is to cover *all* the bases.

From your perspective, I think it's important to remember that the customer is likely to forget the price—especially if he likes the product. Example: You probably have several suits or dresses which you *really* enjoy wearing. Chances are good that if you've had them very long you have forgotten the exact price of those suits or dresses.

People forget price but they'll never forget poor quality or a poor choice. They generally give the salesperson a generous portion of the blame. Some of that goes with the territory, but too much blame means you won't have the territory for long.

The "Quality" Close

In selling low-ticket items (brushes, soap, cosmetics), your time investment would be too great to cover all the foregoing information on dealing with price, so let's look at a power-packed quick response which is enormously effective. You can also use this one to convince the hesitant buyer who says the price is too high in an over-the-counter transaction in a retail outlet.

Lower your voice, look your prospect in the eye, and say, "You know, Mr. Prospect, many years ago our company made a basic decision. *We decided that it would be easier to explain price one time than it would be to apologize for quality forever.* [Slight pause.] And I'll bet you're glad we made that decision, aren't you?"

If you are selling that low-ticket item, this last one might be the *only* one you will use. In situations involving considerable sums of money, it can be the icing on the cake that moves the prospect into the buyer's chair.

State Farm agent Ab Jackson from Tucson, Arizona, was dealing with a prospect and making no progress. As a matter of fact, Ab was in somewhat of a sales slump and this prospect was mildly antagonistic. After Ab had made his presentation and handled several questions, the prospect was fairly emphatic in his statement that the price was too high.

Just as he had learned from the training that covers this close, Ab looked at the prospect, lowered his voice, and said, “Mr. Prospect, at State Farm we decided many years ago that it would be easier to explain price one time than to apologize for poor quality or poor service forever—[pause] and I’ll bet you are glad we made that decision, aren’t you?” The prospect said nothing for a few seconds, then firmly said, “I’ll take it.” The sale was almost exactly twice as big as the biggest contract Ab had ever written.

I urge you to do what Ab Jackson did. Practice, drill, and rehearse until the words and the right voice inflection become a part of you. Do this and you will have developed a powerful tool for persuading your prospect to take the action which will benefit you *and* them.

The “Answer for Everything” Close

Chances are excellent, especially if you are in direct sales, that you have been in a selling situation in which you’ve answered one objection after another. Regardless of what has come up you’ve handled it effectively. Finally, the prospect (in a husband/wife situation) turns to his wife and says, “Oh, Martha, it doesn’t make any difference what you say; he’s got an answer for everything!” Or, in a more sophisticated environment, they might say to you, “Well, you’ve certainly done your homework. It doesn’t make any difference what I ask; you’ve got an answer for it!”

Feed Your Ego—or Make the Sale

If that ever happens (I should say, *when* that happens), you’re faced with a major decision. You can either decide to feed your ego or decide to make the sale. You can’t do both. When they say, “You’ve got an answer for everything,” you can either grin and say, “Well, as a matter of fact, last month I was number one in the office, *and the month before . . .*”—*or* you can take a different approach and make the sale.

If you give the preceding response, you’ve just fed your ego and that’s all you’ll feed. When your prospect makes the statement “You’ve got an answer for everything,” if you want to further your career, you need to

lower your voice, look them in the eye, and slowly, softly say, “Mr. Prospect, I really appreciate that comment and I’m going to take it as a compliment. But actually I don’t have an answer for many of the questions and objections people bring to me. That’s the reason I’m excited about selling the product which *is* the answer to your problem. And that’s what you really want, isn’t it [nodding your head as you talk]?”

That procedure, my selling friend, is stronger than dirt! It will get results, *if* you are sincere *and* believe what you are saying!

Let’s elaborate on that last sentence by saying you can take the biggest crook in town and teach them the words, procedures, and techniques that professional salespeople all over the world successfully use. However, the effectiveness of those words and techniques would be seriously limited by the *credibility* of the person using them. It *is* true—the most important part of the sales process is the salesperson.

High performers in the world of selling establish *trust* with customers through one-on-one, eye-to-eye communication skills. They maintain trust by personally assuming responsibility for completing the sale, which means servicing the account on an ongoing basis and utilizing their company support people in the most effective manner. High performers demonstrate great integrity with their follow-through and belief that the sale is not complete until the product is installed and functioning, and the customer is satisfied.

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1. A yellow or white pad to do your figuring. This procedure clarifies the offer and makes it more believable and understandable. Many people don’t buy because they don’t understand.

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The Professional Sells *and* Delivers

My first "sale." When I'd been in the sales world about three months, in 1947, I used psychology in what I consider my first real sales strategy. Many things were still fairly difficult to get, including good heavy-duty waterless cookware. We were taking as many orders as we could get, but delivery was sometimes delayed for one to three months. World War II had not been over very long, and for about four years no heavy-duty cookware had been available. So there was a backlog of demand. Experienced salesmen were having a field day, but I was a novice and, frankly, I was struggling.

One day I was in Winnsboro, South Carolina, knocking on doors, attempting to sell. I knocked on the door of Mr. Anderson, a highway patrolman whose wife came to the door. She let me in, explaining that her husband and Mr. Boulware from next door were out in the backyard, but that she and Mrs. Boulware would be glad to look at the cookware. Once I got inside, I persuaded the ladies to invite their husbands in, assuring them that they, too, would enjoy the demonstration. The ladies "coerced" their husbands into coming in.

No amount of persuasion, however, could convince the men to take the demonstration seriously. I put on an enthusiastic cooking presentation, cooking apples without water and on low heat in my set of cookware and some by the old-fashioned way with water in the cookware they had. The difference was dramatic, and as I set the apples cooked by two different methods in front of them, both couples were by now impressed with the difference. The men, however, apparently feared they were about to be sold something, so they acted as if they had no interest.

The “Reverse” Close

At that point, I knew the sale was lost, so I decided to use a little reverse selling. I cleaned my cookware, packed it back in the sample case, and said to the couples, “Well, I really appreciate your letting me demonstrate. I only wish I could offer you the cookware today. Perhaps it will be available in the future.”

Immediately both husbands became vitally interested in our set of cookware. Mr. Anderson and Mr. Boulware both came out of their seats and demanded to know when it would be available. I assured them I did not know exactly, but I would keep them in mind when it was. They persisted, “Well, suppose you forget us, how will we know?” I responded, “Well, I suppose—to be on the safe side—it would be all right for you to go ahead and make a deposit on a set which the company would ship when it’s available. It might be a month or it could even be three months.” Both of them eagerly reached into their pockets and came up with the down payment. About six weeks later the merchandise was shipped. (It’s important to note that throughout the presentation I dealt strictly with the facts.)

There is something about human nature that seems to want whatever is unavailable or difficult to obtain. In this case, I was simply using a little sales psychology to capitalize on this facet of human nature.

Two important points: Number one, reverse selling is a very effective method of persuasion, but number two, you must be scrupulously honest and *very careful* that you always play the game straight. Otherwise it is deceitful, and you’ll get caught and your prospects will lose confidence in you. More importantly, you will lose respect for yourself and your self-image will suffer, which means your sales will go down. (Part 2 of *Secrets of Closing the Sale* explains why.)

Selling a Shoe Shine

I believe everyone sells and everything is selling. Here’s a story which demonstrates voice inflection and some sales techniques we’ve been talking about. In the late winter of 1976 I stopped in the St. Louis airport to change

planes. A quick glance at my shoes told me I needed a shine, and my watch told me I had time. That pleased me, because in my opinion the best shoe shiners in the whole world are in that St. Louis airport.

I walked into the little cubicle, and as I stood there the gentleman in the third chair was stepping down. The young shoe shiner said to me, “Come on in, you’re next.” I climbed up in the chair, and while he completed the cash transaction with his customer, I looked over his prices. The prices at that time (they’ve changed since then) were, “Regular Shine, 75¢. Wax Shine, $1.00. Spit Shine, $2.00.” I decided to get the Regular Shine, tip him a quarter, and be on my way.

When Johnny (he had a name tag) came to me after finishing with his other customer, he asked, “What kind?” I responded, “Regular.” He took a short step backward, looked up at me, and said, “Regular?!” (His inflection had both a question and a you’ve-gotta-be-kidding tone.)

I knew then I was headed for an unusual shoe shine, but I wasn’t about to let that dude get the best of me. I said, “Yeah, just give me the regular. You guys do such a fantastic job, I know it’s going to be super good!” He never grunted, never changed expression, never said anything. He reached for the saddle soap and started cleaning my shoes by liberally applying it to both of them. Next he got his cloth to wipe the shoes dry.

When he finished wiping the first one, he rubbed the shoe leather and made it squeak so loudly you could have heard it a block away. He half asked, half commented, “These are Ballys, aren’t they?” Zig: “Well, as a matter of fact, they are.” Johnny: “Man, they are really nice shoes!” Zig: “They ought to be!” Johnny: “They cost a lot of money, don’t they?” Zig: “Yeah, they really do, but I’m not complaining, because these are the most comfortable shoes I’ve ever worn.” Johnny: “They *are* nice shoes.”

The “Shame” Close

By then he had finished wiping the other shoe, so he picked up the shoe polish. Before applying the polish he reached up, grabbed a pant leg, and said, “This is one of the most unusual pieces of cloth I’ve ever felt.” He was right. That particular suit *was* most unusual. Doyle Hoyer, the owner of Glasgow Clothiers in Fort Madison, Iowa, sold me that suit, and he told me

that particular piece of cloth was from Ireland and would last me at least five years. It was a marvelous, marvelous suit.

As I was telling Johnny all these things, he asked, “What kind of suit is it?” I told him it was a Hickey-Freeman. “Man!” he said. “That *is* a nice suit! They cost a lot of money, don’t they?” I replied that Hickey-Freeman is a relatively expensive suit, but this one was especially expensive because of the cloth. As a matter of fact, I spent over two hundred dollars *more* for that suit than any suit I’d ever bought, but I was very happy with the purchase.

By now he had the polish on the shoes and was really giving it that old cloth-popping job. As a shoe shiner of considerable experience (two years in the US Navy), I know something about shining shoes. One thing I know is that if the guy doing the shining starts popping the cloth, he is not shining the shoes any better but he is doing two things. First, as the late Elmer Wheeler would say, he is “selling the sizzle,” and sizzle does sell, and *keeps* the prospect sold, *if* it’s backed with substance. Second, he’s letting the folks outside the shine booth know something exciting is going on inside. He’s prospecting for that next customer, which is something all *professional* salespeople regularly do.

Just as he finished one of the pops, he stopped, looked me in the eye, and said, “You know, it just seems like a shame! [Pause.] A man will spend over a hundred dollars for a pair of shoes; he’ll spend several hundred dollars for a suit of clothes, and all he’s trying to do is look his best. [Pause.] And then he won’t spend another dollar to get the best shine in the whole world to top everything off!” [Pause.] Zig: “Spit on ’em, man, spit on ’em!” (In a pleasant, humorous way he had shamed me into buying a better shine. He put the *other dollar* into perspective by bringing the price of the shoes and suit into focus.)

Sell It—Then Deliver

He finished the shine and it was a beauty! I don’t know how you are, but I personally feel that when I get a seventy-five-cent shine, a two-bit tip is fine. But whoever heard of a two-bit tip on a two-dollar shine? People with any class just don’t do things like that! I gave Johnny a buck to go with the other two and started walking out (strutting would be more accurate),

feeling like the king of the walk while thinking to myself, *What in the world is this guy doing shining shoes?*

Then I looked up at the clock as it flipped to straight up and down, ten o'clock. Now that's very important, because when I sat down in the chair it showed exactly three minutes to ten. I was in Johnny's chair three minutes. I gave him three dollars. You don't have to be a Phi Beta Kappa out of MIT to know that a dollar a minute comes to sixty dollars an hour. Do you realize that's what some psychiatrists made at that time?

Now I'm not a mind reader, but I know what you're thinking. Sixty dollars an hour is $480 a day, and I know he's not going to make that much, so cut that in half. That's $240. Cut that in half, and it's $120. Cut that in half (I'll guarantee that you don't have to cut it that last time) and that's $60 a day. Even if you did, that would still leave him over $18,000 a year shining shoes, and as we'd say down home, if he isn't making over $20,000 a year (lots more than that today), there ain't a dog in Georgia!

But hold the phone! There are two things you need to understand thoroughly. Number one, he is a *professional* salesman. As a matter of fact, his name tag also includes his title, "Shoeologist." To the best of my knowledge, he is the only one in the US. He is *good.*

Number two, *he delivers everything he sells*. (I'm personally convinced our divorce rate would be reduced 90 percent if men and women *delivered* in marriage what they *sold* while courting. I'm also convinced *your* sales career will be even more rewarding if you deliver what you sell.) In short, Johnny does a fantastic job of shining shoes. Fortunately, this story has not one but two sequels.

The "Extra" Close

I was back in the St. Louis airport about a year after the first incident, so I returned to the shoe-shine booth. I had my overnight bag with me, so I hung it up before I sat down. By now they'd changed the price structure a little. "Regular Shine" was a dollar, the wax shine had been eliminated, and the name of the spit shine was "Best Shine." The price was still $2.00. As I sat down, Johnny asked me what kind of shine I wanted. I didn't want to go

through the routine again, so I said, “Just give me the best!” He smiled, said, “Okay,” and went to work.

I found out a long time ago that people do better when you treat them like a good farmer treats his cows. I don’t know how much you personally know about cows, so I’d like to share two things with you. Number one, I can tell you from my experience, dating back to the time I was eight years old, cows don’t “give” milk. You have to fight for every drop. Number two, I can tell you the quality and quantity of the cow’s milk is directly related to the way she is treated.

Walk into the barn and slap the old cow a couple of times, tell her that her production is down, that her butterfat is lower than ever, and that you feel she’s doing a lousy job. Kick her in the side and tell her she’s got to get production up or she’s headed for the hamburger grill, and two things will probably happen.

Number one, she might kick you back. Whether she does or not, I can tell you with absolute certainty that you will not get nearly as much milk, and the milk you do get will probably be unfit for human consumption. The old cow would get so upset that a chemical change would literally take place in her body and the milk would be sour or so bitter you could not drink it.

On the other hand, walk into the barn and pleasantly greet the cow—no, I don’t necessarily think you have to kiss her, but it wouldn’t hurt you to kind of rub her a little bit, maybe even put your arm around her. Tell her she’s got to be the best-looking cow you’ve seen all morning, stroke her a couple of times, and tell her what a nice, soft coat she has. Brag on her and tell her you’re mighty proud of the production she’s given you in the past and you just have a good feeling it’s going to get better and better. If no one’s around, you might even tell her you love her. Not only will this approach improve production but it will also improve the quality of the milk.

Compliments Improve Competence

As a boy I saw it happen time after time. My mother loved all animals, but she especially loved cows. When she bought a cow she would name her, pet her, and treat her like a member of the family. I have seen her buy a three-gallon-a-day producer (average for the 1930s and ’40s) on many occasions

and in a matter of weeks have the same cow producing four or five gallons of milk per day.

Now in case you're wondering what this has to do with shining shoes and selling more merchandise, just read on. I knew Johnny would do a better job of shining my shoes—despite the fact that I already felt he was the best I'd ever seen—if I gave him a little encouragement. With this in mind I started bragging on him. I told him he was doing a marvelous job and the shine looked great. He shined my shoes to a standstill! As a matter of fact, since I was the only customer and I was bragging on him so much, he just kept shining my shoes. I finally told him I had to go, so he finished the job.

As I stepped down out of the chair, I made the observation to Johnny that he obviously enjoyed shining shoes. His response to this was very positive. He explained that he got a lot of pleasure in watching a person come in with grubby-looking shoes and dragging bottom. He said that after a really good shine many times the guys actually seemed to pick up their feet with a new look of pride and enthusiasm.

"Yes," he said, "I do like to shine shoes, but mainly I enjoy people. I meet all kinds and most of them are nice folks, so I really enjoy talking with them." To this I commented, "Well, you certainly do a beautiful job, not only as a sales and public-relations man but also as a fantastic professional at shining shoes."

Johnny was beaming all the way through this, but as I stepped down out of his chair, he said, "Could I ask you a question?" Zig: "Sure." Johnny: "Didn't I see you with an overnight bag when you sat down?" Zig: "You sure did." Johnny: "Are you spending the night in St. Louis?" Zig: "Yes, I am." Johnny: "Do you by any chance have another pair of shoes in that bag?" Zig: "As a matter of fact, I do." Johnny: "You know, it'd really be a shame—[pause] to have the most beautiful shine in St. Louis tonight and then look like just one of the crowd tomorrow. It won't take me but a minute and you'll be on your way!"

Deliver What You Sell

I left Johnny with five dollars that time! But again let me emphasize something I stated earlier. Johnny is a professional salesman and *he delivers what he sells*. For some strange reason a certain segment of our population

seems to believe the professional salesperson must have on a three-piece suit, carry a fancy briefcase, and sell investments, computers, or some specialized product like real estate trusts or mutual funds.

I've seen many people in those industries who were highly professional, and I've seen some who had only the three-piece suit and the fancy briefcase. By the same token, you can be a highly skilled professional salesperson, as Johnny is, and sell shoe shines. The route salesman who services bread racks or soft-drink racks in rural areas can be a truck driver and delivery boy *or* he can become a well-paid *professional* salesman. Ditto for the clerk in the discount store or the butcher behind the meat counter. The professional learns his product, his job, and his clientele. He learns how to use the right words and body language to persuade people to take action. Then he makes absolutely certain he delivers everything he sells *and then some.*

The "Add On" Close

Of even more importance is the fact that Johnny was not content to make just the one sale. He saw a chance for the second and took advantage of the opportunity. I think you already know I was not the least bit offended that he wanted to sell me the second shoe shine. Actually, once you've gained the confidence of your customers with the first sale, you are in a position to be of real service to them. The first order is an indication of trust. If you have companion products which your customers regularly use, you render a service by saving them time, bookkeeping entries, and inventory problems by *helping* them reduce the number of suppliers they deal with.

I'm not suggesting that if you have a multiple line you should try to sell the entire line on every sales call. I am suggesting that if you believe in what you sell and your customer is using similar products, you will do both of you a favor by offering the other products, especially on the second and subsequent sales calls.

The "Gloomy Gus" Close

Incredibly, the story has yet another sequel. One rainy day I was back in the St. Louis airport changing planes again. This time Johnny was not there. As I stepped into the chair, the shoe shiner (soon to be known as "Gloomy Gus") came to me and said, "Well, I suppose you want the Regular Shine?" I looked at him with disbelief and said, "I can't believe you said that! Why would you offer me the Regular instead of the Best?" Gloomy Gus: "In rainy weather people don't want to spend two dollars for a shine and just get it all messed up." Zig: "Won't the Best Shine give my shoes the best protection?" Gloomy Gus: "Yes, it will." Zig: "Well, why didn't you offer me the Best?" Gloomy Gus (or should it now be "Broken Record"?): "People just don't want to spend two dollars for a shine on a rainy day." Zig: "It seems to me that if the Best Shine gives the best protection and your business is down on rainy days, you would work awfully hard to increase the sales of your Best Shine." Gloomy Gus: "Well, I suppose so." (He's hard-core negative.)

Zig: "How would you like for me to give you a few words which would double the number of Best Shines you sell?" Gloomy Gus (with the first sign of a pulse beat): "Man, I would really like that! What are they?" Zig: "The next time a customer comes in and sits down, the first thing you do is look at his shoes. Then you look at his eyes, smile, and say to him, "Unless I miss my guess, you're the kind of guy who is going to want the *best* shine we've got." When he heard those words they apparently struck a responsive chord, because he actually showed some enthusiasm as he said, "Man, give me that one more time!" So I repeated the words.

Changing the Status Quo

I haven't seen this guy again so I don't know the rest of the story, but I do know this: You can change everything about your business by changing your *thinking* about your business. In short, *if you don't like the status quo, change the status of your thinking and old "quo" is gonna be all right!* Regardless of what you're selling, a little optimistic addition and positive expectation to your presentation will increase your volume and hence your profitability. I repeat, *if what you're selling is good, why would you hesitate to offer it to the public in an optimistic manner?*

Remember in dealing with your prospects that most people simply do not like to make decisions. That's the reason you are a salesperson. You are there to give them information, so they can be confident they are making the *right* decision.

Yes, psychology is involved in everything we do. As we conclude this segment on "The Psychology of Closing," I encourage you to develop your sales skills and techniques. I especially urge you to learn how to effectively use that voice of yours. Get emotionally involved in persuading people to take action, really stay motivated, hone your skills to a fine point, and I will SEE YOU AT THE TOP!

Kevin's Xponential Insight #3: What's in It for Me?

Everyone wants to know what's in it for them. Customers do too. Suppose you provide orthodontic services to straighten teeth. The braces you offer are simply the best, the very latest in engineering and health science. No one uses anything better. If you begin to connect with a prospect by telling them how wonderfully *engineered* these braces are, they're going to ask the question, "Well, what's in it for me?" They don't want the best-engineered braces for them or their children, not really. They want straight teeth and a beautiful smile, so they can enjoy greater self-confidence. They want to enjoy eating great food with family and friends for their entire lives. *They don't want braces.* Braces are simply a means to get what they really do want.

Here's the deal: Nobody owes you anything. When you're trying to get in front of the right people to sell your idea, product, or service, it might be easy to think that people owe you their time and attention. When you don't easily get it, you could become discouraged. Listen, we're all busy. We've all got a lot of stuff going on in our lives. It's not that people are mean necessarily, but they have a lot of other priorities competing for their attention. That's normal.

Don't be upset about it. Instead, use it to your advantage by returning to the core secret. You can have everything in life you want, if you will just help enough other people get what they want. What does that mean when it comes to prospecting? Simply this: you can earn the right to speak by delivering value to them.

We did this very thing when getting the word out about our Secrets of Closing the Sale Masterclass. We created helpful, free reports, cheat sheets, and similar resources to deliver value right away. Then I offered a complete video series for free, packed with almost two hours of premium content and free downloads to, first and foremost, deliver value. Then and only then, once I had earned the right to be

heard, did I share about the Masterclass experience. Even then, we loaded the experience with bonus after bonus to give more and more value.

Remember: always start your prospecting by putting yourself in the other person's shoes and asking WIIFM: *What's in it for me?* That is your first priority with any prospect. Find a way to deliver value as quickly as possible. Only then can you earn the right to tell them more about your idea, product, or service.

PART 2

The Heart of Your Sales Career

Objectives

To get the *person* ready to be a better, more productive *sales*person.
To explain selling as a transference of feeling.
To differentiate between sympathy and empathy and help you to think as a buyer and as a seller.
To sell selling and professional preparation for professional results.
To explain the necessity of building a physical, mental, and spiritual reserve.
To introduce love as the dominant factor in a successful sales career.
To explore the importance of honesty, conviction, and integrity as absolute musts for an outstanding sales career.

Closes and/or Procedures

The "Believer's" Close
The "Ownership" Close Revisited
The "Get 'Em Smiling" Close
The "Empathy" Close
The "Physical Action" Close
The "Can't Afford It" Close
The "Go Giver" Close
The "Columbus" Close

The “Courtship” Close
The “Testimonial” Close
The “Love” Close

8

The Critical Step in Selling

From the beginning we stated that the critical part of the sales process is the honesty and integrity of the salesperson. When I speak of honesty I'm not talking about paying your bills or writing good checks. In today's digital age, when you give a hot check it's discovered immediately. If you don't pay your bills, it becomes common knowledge through the credit bureaus. It's good business to write good checks and to pay your bills.

When I speak of honesty in the world of selling, I go one step beyond that—and that step is significant. The following two stories will spell out exactly what I mean.

Ya Gotta Believe

Years ago (1963), I was the number one cookware salesman in America for the Saladmaster Corporation of Dallas, Texas. We lived in Columbia, South Carolina, and business was fantastic. An associate of mine, selling the same product in the same town, was "starving to death." Once, while visiting in his home, we were in the kitchen having a cup of coffee, talking about his sales decline, when the following dialogue took place:

Zig: "Bill, I know exactly what your problem is." Bill: "What's my problem, Zig?" Zig: "Your problem is simple. You're attempting the psychologically impossible." Bill: "What are you talking about?" Zig: "You're trying to sell a product you don't enthusiastically believe in." Bill: "Zig, that's crazy! Man, we've got the greatest set of cookware on the American market! It's absolutely fantastic! As a matter of fact, Zig, I left the company I'd been with for four years and came with Saladmaster

because of the superiority of the product. In addition to that, I was a manager with the other company and started here as a salesman because of my belief in this product."

Zig: "Aw, come on, Bill. Peddle that baloney to other people! I know you and I know you don't believe what you're saying." Bill (a little hot under the collar): "You can say what you want to, but I *know* I believe in our product." Zig: "Bill, I can prove beyond any doubt that you do not *really* believe in the product you sell." And with that, I nodded toward the stove.

Bill: "Awwwww, you mean the fact that I'm cooking in a competitive set of cookware?" Zig: "Bill, that's exactly right." Bill: "Zig, don't give it a thought. Man, that's got nothing to do with it. I'm going to buy a set of our cookware, but you know I've had my problems. We wrecked our car and for a couple of months we had to depend on borrowed transportation, buses, and taxis. Now, Zig, you know you can't get the job done in the sales world unless you have transportation you can depend on twenty-four hours a day.

"On top of that, my wife spent a couple of weeks in the hospital and I lost a lot of time from work and spent a lot of money because we don't have hospitalization insurance. Now add the worry and concern I've had and surely you can understand why it knocked us for a loop! And it's not over, because it looks like we're going to have to put the boys in the hospital to get their tonsils out and, Zig, we still don't have any insurance! You're right when you say we should have a set of the cookware, and we are definitely going to get a set, but the timing is just not right!"

Selling Is a Transference of Feeling

Zig: "Bill, let me ask you a question. How long have you been with this company?" Bill: "Oh, about five years." Zig: "Bill, what was your excuse last year, and the year before that, and the year before that, and the year before that, and the year before that? [Pause.] Let me tell you exactly what happens when you get down to the 'short rows' [that's Southern for decision-making time], when you ask your prospect that obligating question and he's 'thinking it over.' The decision ball is up in the air; *yes* is full commission, *no* is no commission.

"I can see the scene now, Bill, so let me paint the picture for you. The customer is thinking out loud as he says, 'I don't know, Bill. Boy, we sure

need a good set of pots. I don't know how my wife cooks in that stuff she has, but it just doesn't seem like the right time to get 'em now. My wife's been in the hospital, we just wrecked the family car, it looks as if the boys are going to have to have their tonsils taken out, and we don't even have any insurance!'

"Now, Bill, you and I both know they're not about to give you exactly the same excuses you've been giving me. But we also know they are going to give you the same excuses you've been giving yourself for the last five years. You are well trained, Bill, so I know exactly what you are going to do every time they give you an excuse for not buying. You're going to sit there with a forced grin on your face, saying to yourself, 'Think positive now, Bill, think positive, Bill!' But all the time, deeeeeep down inside, you're going to be thinking, *Yeah, I know exactly what you mean. That's the reason I don't have a set of the stuff myself.*

"Let me tell you something, Bill. The smartest thing you'll ever do, even if you've got to mortgage your furniture, is to buy a set of your own cookware. Hear me on this, Bill:

Selling is essentially a transference of feeling.

If I (the salesman) can make you (the prospect) feel about my product the way I feel about my product, you are going to buy my product if there is any way in the world you can come up with the money.

"Now in order to transfer a feeling, you've got to have that feeling. When you're trying to persuade somebody to do something you have not done yourself, that fact comes across to the prospect. Of course, all salesmen can occasionally con a person into buying something they don't really believe in, but if you're going to build an outstanding career, you've got to be *committed* to the product yourself. You've got to believe, because as Bernie Lofchick from Winnipeg, Canada, the greatest sales manager I know, says, 'Believers are *closers.*'"

The very word *close* starts with a *c.* That *c* stands for *conviction.* Take the *c* out of *close* and you have *lose,* which is what you *and* the prospect do when your lack of conviction and belief influences the prospect in a *no* decision.

Kevin's Xponential Insight #4: Selling Is a Transference of Feeling

I believe in the power of transference when you're selling, because the mind has the power to shape reality. Back in my teenage, high-chair-selling days, I didn't get a whole lot of training, but my boss did give me—a scrawny, four-foot, eleven-inch teen—a thirty-page script of selling tips and turned me loose. He probably thought he wouldn't see me again. But I had a secret weapon.

I believed that I could really control my own destiny. I wasn't afraid to step out. I wasn't even afraid to get the door slammed in my face. I came back with that entire script memorized and raring to go. So that boss saw my confidence and took me under his wing. We went out on sales calls together and his teaching became another turning point in my life. I had the passion and self-determination. He supplied the techniques and the systems to close those deals. I went from closing one out of ten sales to closing seven out of ten sales on a regular basis.

I've lived my life based on this quotation from Paul J. Meyer: "Whatever you vividly imagine, ardently desire, sincerely believe, and enthusiastically act upon must inevitably come to pass." These are the four words I want you to remember: Imagine. Desire. Believe. Act. Those are the four words that I live by every day.

You are your most valuable asset. You have to believe in yourself before you can expect others to believe in you. When you truly believe, people will respond. And your belief will empower you to act. What you think about you bring about, because selling is believing. Zig's secret became my secret and now it's yours too.

Buy It—and You Can Sell It

What about you? Are you convinced of the merits of your merchandise? If you're selling Fords and driving a Chevrolet, then, my friend, it's costing you a great deal of money. Believe in what you sell—or do yourself, your company, your friends, your "victims," and the profession of selling a favor: change products or get out of the profession. Your failure is predestined, so why prolong the death rattle? The sooner you make the change into something you can honestly and enthusiastically pursue, the sooner you will start climbing the ladder to success. Obviously, there will be some exceptions in buying or using what you sell. For example, if you sell locomotives, million-dollar computers, or 747s, I don't necessarily believe you have to buy one to prove you believe in it!

To emphasize that point I make the following statement without reservation: If you don't believe the customers are the losers when they *don't* buy, you are selling the wrong product. If you don't feel a sense of loss for them, you are not going to be as effective and persuasive as you could be. Selling *is* a transference of feeling, and your prospects are persuaded more by your pride and belief in your product than by any "proof" you submit regarding your product's performance.

The "Believer's" Close

To make a long story short, I sold Bill a set of the cookware. Don't misunderstand; he wrote his own order and bought it from himself. The exciting "rest of the story" is that the additional sales Bill made that week paid for his own set of cookware! The reason is simple. Every time someone brought up the "can't afford it" objection, Bill could handle it with his head *and* his heart. Bill knew that he had dug in and bought his own product when it hurt to do so. He understood how those prospects felt, but now he was able to deal with them with empathy and not sympathy. (We cover the difference in considerable detail in the next chapter.)

Bill *understood* how the prospects felt, but he did not *feel* the same way, because he had bought his own set of cookware. He had made the sacrifice so he could look them in the eye and say, "I know how you feel, but I know from experience it's worth the sacrifice. You'll never regret it." Results were dramatic. *His sales skyrocketed because he was selling from a belief base tied directly to his heart.*

You've gotta believe. I personally feel that *honesty means we believe so deeply, so completely, so fervently in what we are selling that we can't understand why other people don't buy.* When our belief is that deep, our prospect picks it up. Chances are excellent you've had somebody say to you, "I don't know why I'm listing this home with you, or giving you my business. There have been half a dozen people by here this week and I turned them down." Many times they really don't know, but it gets down to the basic fact that they trust you because of your conviction. They "feel" they can depend on your integrity and fairness. Many times this trust is because of the reputation you have built over a period of years *and* because

of that deep belief and feeling you have in and for your product which is *transferred* to your prospect.

One of the major points—if not *the* major point—revealed in The Forum Corporation study was the fact that high-performing salespeople are *trusted* by their customers. They are trusted, over the long haul, for a very good reason. They are *trustworthy.* Being honest is practical.

"Closers" Own What They Sell

Life insurance companies will tell you they can take a hundred salespeople with at least one year's experience and without looking at their sales records predict within five percentage points what these salespeople, as a group, are going to sell for the year. They make their predictions based solely on the amount of insurance these people carry on their own lives. You see, selling is a transference of feeling. *The critical step in the world of selling is this step of honesty which is your total conviction, your complete belief that the product or service you sell is truly the best buy for the prospect.*

When I entered the world of sales training on a professional level, I shared my experience with Bill (own what you sell) in a series of recordings. An enthusiastic young fire-alarm salesman listened to the story and realized he apparently did not believe in his product because he did not own the alarm system himself. His conscience was prodded and he installed the alarms in his own home. Later he wrote me and said, "You know, Zig, the first month I had that set of alarms in my own home I made enough extra sales to completely pay for them."

The "Ownership" Close Revisited

Countless other salespeople, selling everything from cars and cosmetics to insurance and soap, have shared the same experience. Once you've made that emotional *and* financial commitment which says, "I believe in my product so strongly that I bought it myself," then you can transfer that feeling to the other individual. In a nutshell, *closers own what they sell.*

When the prospect brings up a “can’t afford it” objection, you can with considerable conviction point out that your product is so good it’s *worth* sweating and sacrificing for. Obviously, you will be hypocritical and hence not very convincing if *you* have not invested in your own product.

To repeat myself, if you are selling Fords, you should be driving a Ford. If you sell 747s, locomotives, steamships, or multimillion-dollar computers, you don’t need to buy one. But generally speaking, if it’s feasible, you should believe in what you sell so much that you are willing, even *anxious*, to sacrifice—if necessary—to own it. If you do not honestly feel the prospect is the loser if they don’t buy, then you’re not going to be nearly as effective in the world of selling.

Not only should you believe in the product you sell, but you should also believe in and be loyal to the company you represent. Your effectiveness and productivity will be affected by your feelings toward your management and your company. I urge you to read Russell Conwell’s *Acres of Diamonds*, which beautifully illustrates the fact that opportunity and “gold mines” are everywhere—including right where you are. You can and will find exactly what you look for in your life.

As a sales procedure it’s smart and professional to praise and build your company everywhere you go. After all, how much confidence do you have in someone who bad-mouths his mate, his city, his company, or any of the people associated with the company?

Believe in your product *and* your company. Transfer that belief to the prospect and not only will you sell more, you will sell it more easily, and those customers will get you other customers. That’s career-building selling.

9

The Big “E” in Selling

Psychologist H. M. Greenberg did a psychological evaluation on 186,000 people and discovered that one out of five could be trained to be a successful salesperson. He also discovered that if anyone is going to be outstanding as a salesperson, he has to have a special kind of ego. This special ego requires the “food” of acceptance by the prospects he deals with.

When a salesperson calls on a prospect and is granted an appointment, the prospect is really saying, “I buy you, so come on in and tell me the story.” When the prospect becomes a customer, they are saying to the salesperson, “I trust you. I believe you’re telling me the truth, so go ahead and write the order.”

Dr. Greenberg says the top salesperson needs to make the sale primarily because each sale is a reaffirmation of their own power, of their own ability, and because failure to close threatens their self-esteem. They like the conflict; they like to win; they like to sell.

To be a truly outstanding salesperson, you’ve got to have an ego, but according to Dr. Greenberg, you’d better watch that salesperson if *all* they have is ego, because they will do just about anything to make the sale. The result is disaster, for both customer and salesperson. The customer is often abused and the salesperson will never build the sales career they’re capable of building. In many cases they do well on a temporary basis, but their shortcuts, misrepresentations, and exaggerations will eventually catch up and they will have to move on to another city or another product line. Dr. Greenberg emphasizes if you’re going to build a sales career, in addition to ego you’ve got to have *empathy.*

Empathy vs. Sympathy. Despite the general use of the word *empathy*, many people still do not recognize the difference between empathy and

sympathy and their application in the world of selling. This understanding is important, because if we tie empathy to ego, there's little danger we're going to oversell, which is sometimes a problem in the sales world.

Sympathy means you feel like another person feels. Empathy means you *understand* how the other person feels, though you do not feel the same way.

Example: When you observe a passenger leaning over the rail of a ship, suffering from seasickness, sympathy is perfectly demonstrated when you join them at the rail. Empathy is when you understand how the passenger feels, so you get them a cold towel and some seasickness pills to help them solve the problem. With empathy you understand and are sensitive to the feedback from the other person. You're not part of the problem, so you can back away and become part of the solution.

In this part of the book my objective is to get you to think both as a buyer and as a seller. To be truly professional you must be able to move comfortably from the seller's side of the table to the buyer's side. If you know how your prospect thinks and feels, you're definitely going to sell more of what you're selling because you will communicate more effectively.

With empathy the following little dissertation on business (author unknown) takes on significant meaning.

When we separate the word *business* into its component letters, B-U-S-I-N-E-S-S, we find that U and I are *both* in it. In fact, if U and I were not in *business*, it would not be business. Furthermore, we discover that U comes before I in business and the I is silent—it is to be seen, not heard. Also, the U in business has the sound of I, which indicates it is an amalgamation of the interests of U and I. When they are properly amalgamated, business becomes harmonious, profitable, and pleasant.

Kevin's Xponential Insight #5: Empathy Provides Understanding

In the infomercial industry, we have to constantly balance empathy with sympathy. In particular, health and fitness products require a steady empathetic sell—rather than a sympathetic one. For example, as a personal trainer, Tony Little often worked with people who were a hundred to two hundred pounds overweight. The issue of weight is a sensitive subject for many people, but one that they do really want to improve. If Tony *only* sympathized with them and said, "Oh I feel so sorry for you," to make them feel better, he wouldn't help them.

An empathetic trainer is looking to actually improve someone's life: giving a plan, not just selling a piece of equipment. An empathetic salesperson wants to help people change their lifestyles, eating habits, and workout routines—well beyond the sale. In fact, to do that, Tony offered free a phone number to a health coach with every order. Once you bought a piece of equipment from him, you had effortless access to one of his coaches who would help you succeed.

Bottom line: don't get distracted by people playing the blame game. It's important to remember to always give empathy, not just sympathy.

Don't Confuse Situations

As a salesperson it should be obvious to you that you never confuse your situation with your prospect's situation. You must remember that your wants, needs, desires, tastes, and capacity to pay have no bearing on your prospect's needs, wants, desires, and ability to pay.

As an example, you might be a clothing salesperson with personal tastes that are flashy. If a conservatively dressed businessman comes in for a suit, you obviously want to take note of what he's wearing. Then think in terms of what he wants and needs. If he looks at an expensive suit or sports coat which you could not afford, it doesn't mean you should try to talk him down to a less expensive item. Far from it.

If, on the other hand, you could afford something nicer but your prospect cannot, you should not try to sell him something which is completely out of his price range. Be very careful not to turn up your nose at a bargain-basement suit since *you* would not wear such a thing. Remember, for him that suit might be the epitome of luxury.

The same principle applies whether you're selling cars, houses, life insurance, or investments. In short, *don't confuse your situation with his.* Look at the goods, products, or services you sell through *his* eyes. That's empathy—and that's the professional way.

Eager He Was—Professional and Empathetic He Wasn't

Good technique at the wrong time can be disastrous, because there is such a thing as the 100 percent wrong time to try to sell even a superb product. Undoubtedly the worst bit of timing I have ever encountered occurred not long after we moved to Dallas. Our son, Tom, was a little less than four years old. Late one afternoon we suddenly missed him. We immediately went to the homes on either side of our house. We looked up and down the street and in the back alley. Then I quickly hopped in my car and drove up to the intersection and through the parking lot of the small shopping center. In the meantime, my wife was busy calling the neighbors and our girls were out scouring the neighborhood and calling at the tops of their voices for Tom. There was no response.

We looked fast and furiously for what seemed like an eternity, but in reality it was probably no more than twenty minutes; by then we were getting scared. I called the Dallas police and told them our problem, and in a matter of minutes they responded and joined the search. In the meantime, I made another trip to the shopping center, circled the block, and went up and down the alleys, rolling down my windows and calling for Tom everywhere I went. In the process I aroused the concern and interest of several neighbors who also joined in the search.

Naturally, I checked back by the house every few minutes. During one of these check-ins I encountered a salesman for one of the local patrol organizations which are very much in evidence in our society today.

I blurted out that my son was missing and asked if he would help us find him. Incredibly enough, the man started trying to sell me his patrol service. As he started his presentation I was in some shock, and when he continued it for a few more seconds, I stopped and—partially in disbelief, partially in frustration, partially in anger—explained rather heatedly that if he would help me find my son, *then* we would talk about his services.

His Empathy Was Nonexistent

His timing could not have been worse. Surely no one with enough intelligence to get out of a phone booth without written directions on the side would ever make such a mistake. I use the example only to point out that timing combined with empathy is prerequisite to sales success. Sensitivity to the other person’s needs and interests is of paramount

importance. For example, had the patrol salesman joined in the search, in just twenty minutes he would have made the easiest sale in his career. You guessed it—we found our son.

As a rule of thumb, when I call someone on the phone, whether it's for a social or a business call, after the initial greeting I always ask a question in this manner: "Did I catch you at a busy time, or do you have four [or seven, nine, etc.—all other salesmen ask for five, ten, etc.] minutes to talk?" Not only is this a courteous move, but in my judgment it's good selling. If my prospect's mind is somewhere else, my chances of a sale are greatly reduced.

In personal contacts, if your prospect is obviously not with you, I urge you to stop your presentation and say, "Mr. Prospect, apparently I've caught you at a bad time. Would you be freer to discuss this proposal at a later time, or would you prefer that I continue?" It's tough to sell when he's not paying attention. A move like this will bring his mind back to the presentation if he was just thoughtlessly drifting. If he is preoccupied, chances are good he will appreciate your consideration and give you an appointment for a later time. This will partially obligate him to you to the degree that he will probably give you his undivided attention when you return.

The "Get 'Em Smiling" Close

As a sales trainer, I'm going to suggest that if you can get your prospects smiling and agreeing with you as you go into the body of your presentation, your chances of making a sale are considerably greater. The reason is simple: *They must buy you before they will buy your ideas or services.* A friendly smile or a laugh is a reasonably good indication they are buying you as a person and will therefore be more likely to buy what you are selling. And it is unlikely your prospect is going to have negative feelings about your product or services with a big smile on their face or after a good laugh.

As a salesman, I'm convinced it is impossible to be completely wrapped up in what you are doing and *not* in rare instances get a rise out of a prospect who is offended by your zeal and commitment. This could and

should happen, *but* (now read this carefully) it should happen so rarely that you know, and you know that you know, it's the *prospect* who has the problem. On pages 318–21 I cover the procedure you should use to calm the prospect *and* make the sale.

Now let's look at two examples which clearly demonstrate that *sympathy costs you and the prospect while empathy pays you and the prospect.*

Sympathy Costs

Many years ago, not long after I started my career in the cookware business, I called on a farmer and his wife who had attended my demonstration the night before. We were back in the kitchen when I made my presentation—which I'll never forget.

When I finished he just held up his hand and said, "Mr. Ziglar, this probably won't mean much to you because I know you've got a bathroom *inside* your house. But me and my wife have been married over twenty years, and for twenty years I've been promising her, 'Next year, honey, we're going to build a bathroom.' Every year it's always 'next year,' because one year we would have a bad crop, another year the baby would get sick, or we had to buy a new tractor."

He continued, "For over twenty years I've been struggling to build that bathroom, and I've finally got that money right here, right now." (As he said this he patted his money pocket, which was at the top center of the overalls.) "But," he said, "ain't you or nobody else going to get one dime of my money until we build that bathroom."

Who Sells Whom?

I emphasize this: *A sale is made on every presentation. The prospect either sells you that they can't or won't buy or you sell them that they can and should buy.* In this case and at that time of my career, I was badly overmatched. That old boy was a super salesman and he had a fantastic prospect (me) who was far too willing to buy what he was selling. In short, I was sympathetic—and here's why.

When I was a boy we had “running water” at our house, which means that we had to “run and get it,” if you know what I mean. When he hinted about those cold, wet trips which you associate with outdoor bathrooms, even though it was August I shivered three times! I had so much *sympathy* for his situation I wouldn’t have done *anything* to jeopardize that old boy’s bathroom, so I folded my tent and “stole away like a thief in the night”!

I left graciously and pleasantly because my friend and first sales trainer, Bill Cranford, had taught me when you miss a sale you should always terminate the interview in such a way that the next salesperson can easily gain admission to that prospect’s mind. In show business they tell you to “leave ’em laughing.” In sales the professional terminates the interview with the prospect in at least a friendly frame of mind. In this case, I was confident we had parted on friendly terms because he even invited me back for a cup of coffee if I was ever in the neighborhood again.

Two days later I bumped into his sister on the streets of the little town of Lancaster, South Carolina. Even though this was in 1948, I still remember the conversation. (Incidentally, she had a vested interest in the sale, because if her brother had bought she would have gotten a premium.)

Sister: “What in the world happened to you and my brother?” Zig: “What do you mean, ‘What happened?’” Sister: “He’s so mad at you I think he’ll whip you if he ever sees you again!” Zig: “Him—mad at me? A nice guy like me?” Sister: “He sure is!” Zig: “Well, why is he mad at me?” Sister: “Very simple. He wanted to buy a set of pots and you wouldn’t even sell ’em to him!” Zig: “Well, I’ll go back out there right now!” Sister: “It’s too late. He doesn’t trust you anymore!”

Hear What the Prospect Is Saying—Not Just What They Say

For a long time I could not conceive of the difficulty. I won’t tell you that one day it hit me like a bolt out of the blue, because it didn’t. But over a period of time the basic problem became clear to me. I had heard every word the old boy *said*, but didn’t hear a word he was *saying.* Let me explain.

I had demonstrated and proved beyond any reasonable doubt that our set of cookware would save money, work, and food value. The farmer and his

wife had seven small children between the ages of two and sixteen. It was obvious they had a large family, because I don't care how clever you are, you just can't hide seven small children in a little house.

This man had seen and heard the benefits of the cookware at the demonstration. The next day at the presentation in his home, he *said*, "I've been working over twenty years to get the money to build my bathroom. I've got it right here, but neither you nor anybody else is going to get one dime of it until we build that bathroom." *That's what he said, but that is not what he was saying.*

He was saying, "Mr. Ziglar, for over twenty years I've been struggling, trying to raise the money to build a bathroom, but at long last I've got the problem solved." (He even patted his money pocket.) His body language and home environment were also saying, "Look, I've got seven kids and I want to feed them the best food at the lowest possible price with the most food value. My wife, bless her heart, being the mother of seven children and a farm wife, too, she's working herself to death. Mr. Ziglar, do you have *anything* that would save her some work, my children some food value, and me some money?"

That's what he was saying! That's what his environment was saying. But I was so wrapped up in *sympathy* with a problem *he had already solved* that I lost sight of or failed to recognize his much bigger problem, namely, feeding those kids the best way and taking a workload off his wife. Obviously, if you are not completely tuned in to your prospect's major need, you are not going to offer a solution. Sympathy cost me the sale, but of infinitely more importance, it cost the prospect the use of a product that would have been very beneficial to him. Sympathy costs the salesperson *and* the prospect.

Empathy Pays

Empathy is different. Jay Martin, a friend of mine from Memphis, Tennessee, is the president of National Safety Associates, a company which sells smoke-and-fire detectors. One evening he was working with one of his young dealers. The dealer made a good, solid presentation to a prospect. When he finished he asked the obligating question. Then, Jay said, "Zig, this old boy, who probably didn't finish the first grade, reared back on the

hind legs of his chair, folded his arms, and said, ‘Well, son, of course you’ve heard about my wreck!’ The young man hadn’t, so the prospect proceeded to give him all the details.”

This Guy Had Problems

Prospect: “Me and my wife were driving down the highway a couple of months ago and this dude who was passing on the wrong side of the road hit us head-on, tore our car all to pieces, and put us both in the hospital. As a matter of fact, I was in there nearly two weeks myself and it left my ankle kind of stiff. Since I work on a piece-good basis, I haven’t been able to get around as well and my income’s down and, man, that sure hurts!

“My wife was in the hospital over six weeks and she was gone so long her company phased out her job, so she’s not even working. When you’ve been used to two incomes and all of a sudden you’ve only got one, man, that sure creates a problem! The hospital bill for both of us was over twenty thousand dollars. Now I know the insurance company’s eventually going to pay it, but they sure have us nervous in the meantime!

“On top of all of that, just last week our boy came home from the navy and the first night at home he rounded a curve too fast, went over an embankment and down into a service station, tore up our other car, and destroyed a six-thousand-dollar oil company sign. Now I know the insurance is going to pay for the car, but I don’t know about that sign. I’ll tell you right now, if we have to come up with six thousand dollars, we’re really going to be up a creek and I don’t know what we’ll do!

“If all of that isn’t enough, just last night we checked my mother-in-law into the most expensive nursing home in the county. The only other living relative is a brother and I know he won’t do anything. He hasn’t even been heard from in over a year and he’s not worth shooting even if we did know where he was. I know I’m going to have to carry the whole load.”

The “Empathy” Close

As you review this old boy's problems, the chances are excellent you feel good about *your* situation in life, don't you? I mean, he did have a pretty heavy load to carry. If you were the salesman on this call and you had a lot of sympathy, you would probably say, "Oh, that's just terrible, and I'll bet it's even worse than that! You just don't want to make me feel bad and that's the reason you're not telling me the rest of it! But let me ask you a question. Won't the government do something? What about the Red Cross? What about your neighbors? Won't the church make a contribution? Can't you at least get food stamps?" Now *that's* sympathy, but according to Jay Martin this salesman did not have sympathy. He had empathy.

With empathy you are emotionally detached from the problem so you can offer solutions. *You move from your side of the table to the prospect's side. Realistically that is where the sale is going to be made, and the chance of that happening is greatly increased, because from their side of the table you can make your presentation from their point of view.*

According to Jay, that's what the young dealer was able to do. He looked the prospect in the eye and said, "Tell me, sir, in addition to those things, would there be any other reason you could not go ahead and protect the lives of your family by installing these smoke-and-fire detectors in your home?"

I don't know if you know what a *conniption* is, but that's exactly what that old boy had. He literally roared with laughter, slapped his leg, and said, "No, son, those are the only reasons we couldn't go ahead and buy the alarms today. Ha, ha, ha!" (At that point I believe it would be safe to say that he did not consider himself a prospect.)

The "Physical Action" Close

Strategically the salesman had made a very wise move. You should bring out all the objections as early as possible so you can deal with them in the body of the presentation or early in the negotiating phase of selling.

When the salesman learned there were no other reasons for not buying, he never hesitated. He reached down into his sample case (Jay Martin calls this the "Physical Action" Close) and removed one of the smoke detectors. He held the detector up against the wall to let the prospect see how it looked

and said, “Sir, as nearly as I can tell, you now owe nearly thirty thousand dollars [pause]—and three hundred more just won’t make any difference at all.” (Pause—followed by the statement that got the sale.) He lowered his voice, looked the man in the eye, and quietly said, “Sir, fire—under *any* circumstances—is devastating. But in *your* case, it would wipe—you—out!” The technique was professional, the logic was sound. He got the sale.

He took the reason the old boy was giving him as to why he could *not* buy and used that as the reason he *must* buy. *I don’t care what you sell, the odds are at least ten to one that the prospect’s reason for not buying can be used as a reason they* should *buy.* That last sentence is quite significant, so let’s explore it further.

The “Can’t Afford It” Close

In 1978 we had a severe hailstorm in Dallas. The winds blew, the hail fell, and rain came down in sheets. The next morning a nice little artistic design on the ceiling in our living room, den, and kitchen indicated we had a real problem. We called the roofer and his estimate came to something over $5,300. Now if I had said, “Can’t afford it!” the salesman, assuming he was a pro, would have said to me, “Mr. Ziglar, if you can’t afford to repair your roof, won’t it be even more difficult after a few more rainstorms to afford the new furniture, the paint job, and the new insulation in the attic, and still have to afford the new roof?”

One more time: Chances are excellent you can use the prospect’s reason for not buying as the reason he *ought* to buy. “What do you mean, ten dollars to balance a tire? I can’t afford to pay that kind of money!” “Mr. Prospect, if you can’t afford ten dollars to balance a tire, then how will you be able to afford the greater expense of the new tire you’re going to need much sooner?”

“Premiums! Man, I can’t pay any more life insurance premiums now!” You’ve heard it a thousand times: “I’m already insurance-poor!” To begin with, I would say, “I’ve never met a widow who felt that her husband carried too much life insurance.” That’s the first thing. And the second: “If you, working full time, cannot pay the premium, how will your family pay the grocery bill and the house payment if you are not there to work at all?”

“All that money for storm windows? Can’t afford it!” “Mr. Prospect, if you can’t afford the bill for the storm windows, what about the ever-increasing fuel bill?”

My salespeople (I, too) are confronted with the same objection after a presentation. “I can’t afford it!” We teach our sales reps to look at the prospect and, with a smile, softly say, “Sir, if you are serious when you say you can’t afford a few dollars for this training course on closing the sale, may I gently suggest you need to take whatever steps are necessary to get this course? The reason is simple: The techniques and closes will help you close more sales. By the way, sir, how many extra sales would you need to make in order to get your entire investment back?”

As you explore what empathy and ego are all about, you’ll discover that what I’m really saying is, “Move to the prospect’s side of the table, *identify* the problem, get involved in the solution, and your closing percentage will increase.”

Empathy Improves Teamwork

Ted Lamb is a successful Chevrolet dealer in Prescott, Arizona. In 1982 (a serious recession year for the auto industry), Lamb Chevrolet increased its unit sales by 69 percent over 1981 and its dollar volume by 68 percent over 1981. From a profitability point of view, 1982 was Lamb’s best year as a Chevrolet dealer.

Many factors enter the picture when you start asking the why and how of such a tremendous year. To begin with, Ted is a hardworking optimist who is civic minded and family oriented. He is also a creative manager with a “go give” spirit. And he possesses a tremendous amount of empathy.

All successful businesses must have a spirit of oneness and teamwork among the various departments. This is especially true in the automobile business, in which cooperation between sales and service rates at the top of the totem pole in importance. On too many occasions, communication breakdowns occur because the sales department can’t understand why the service department is unable to give 100 percent instantly perfect service to all reasonable and unreasonable customers. By the same token, the service people can’t understand why salespeople constantly put them on the spot with “impossible” and often “idiotic” requests for service.

At Lamb Chevrolet those communication problems are few and far between because of a unique procedure initiated several years ago. Periodically the service manager and the sales manager (who incidentally enjoy the same income) swap hats, departments, and responsibilities for a few days. This way each manager literally does walk in the other manager's shoes. He gains considerable insight into the day-to-day responsibilities, opportunities, and yes, even challenges the other manager faces. In the process he develops considerable empathy for his companion manager's role. Needless to say, when each manager returns to his own stand, it is with a deeper appreciation and understanding of the role the other manager plays in the daily operation of the business.

This process produces three winners. Each manager gains a new appreciation for the familiar waters of his own job and the unfamiliar waters of the other manager's job, so he wins. The customer wins because of better service in *both* departments. Lamb Chevrolet wins because the team spirit in all departments enables them to serve their customers better, which means they have more customers to serve.

10

The Right Mental Attitude

As we carefully explore the building of a sales career, one area that stands near the top of the *must* list is the development of the right mental attitude. My book *See You at the Top* deals with attitude in considerable depth, so I'm not going to go into extensive detail concerning attitude as it relates to closing the sale. However, there are four phases of attitude which I feel are critical if you're going to *close* the sale instead of get *close* to the sale.

First, we will look at attitude in general. Second, we will look at your attitude toward you, meaning essentially your self-image. Third, we will explore your attitude toward the prospects you're going to be dealing with; and fourth, we will look at your attitude toward the profession of selling.

Positive Thinking Can Be Frustrating

As an advocate of positive thinking, I frequently encounter people who are enormously confused about the subject. They often think we positive thinkers believe that with positive thinking we can do anything. That's ridiculous. Positive thinking won't let you do *anything*, but it will help you do *everything* better than negative thinking will.

I don't care how positive I became, I could not whip the heavyweight champion of the world. As a matter of fact, I don't even believe I could take out your appendix and have you live. But this I know: if you and I were isolated on a desert island a thousand miles from everybody and you were to suffer an attack of appendicitis, I personally believe you would prefer I approach you with a winning attitude!

Surely you would feel much better if I were to enthusiastically say, “I’m not a doctor, but reading a lot and watching a lot of television give me reason to be positive. In the last week I watched three appendectomies and, fortunately, I have an extremely sharp knife with me and some powerful medicine that will kill all the infection. [My optimistic nature would have me going after Moby Dick in a rowboat and taking the tartar sauce with me!]

“Personally I believe that despite my lack of training I can get your appendix out of there, and I just flat believe you’re going to make it!” Odds are great you would prefer that approach and attitude over my looking you in the eye and saying, “Man, you’re gonna die!”

As a practical matter, there isn’t one doctor in a hundred who wouldn’t agree that the first approach would give you a much better chance of surviving.

You Can Do It—Here’s How

Realistically there is a chance that pure positive thinking and motivation without direction can lead to frustration. For example, someone convinces you that you’ve got what it takes. They say, “Go for it. I know you’re going to make it,” and then send you out with no training or direction. There is a chance you will fall flat on your face and become frustrated and dejected.

With this in mind, let me briefly identify what I believe. Positive thinking is an optimistic hope—not necessarily based on any facts—that you can move mountains. *I’ve seen positive thinking move some mountains.* Positive believing is the same optimistic hope, based on reasons for believing you can move those mountains. *I’ve seen positive believing move far more mountains.*

Secrets of Closing the Sale is a book of positive *believing.* It gives you *reasons* for believing you can move those mountains (make more sales). It gives you the methods, techniques, and procedures which, when applied, will result in more sales. The game plan for *Secrets* is simple: *I will never make a promise—unless I give you a plan and procedure to make that promise possible.*

Your Mental Attitude Makes the Difference

Your mental attitude and everything else about you is influenced or controlled by what goes into your mind. It's safe to say that *you are what you are and where you are because of what has gone into your mind. You change what you are and where you are by changing what goes into your mind.*

Chances are excellent you want most of the things in life everyone else wants: good health, extra money, security, friends, peace of mind, happiness, and all the good stuff. Assuming you either don't have all these things or at least don't have them in the amount or to the extent you desire them, two possibilities exist.

First, you might be too young and simply haven't had enough time. (If you're over thirty, I hope you don't hide behind that one.) Second, and far more likely, your *behavior* is not producing the desired results. This being the case, it should be clear that you need to *change* behavior if you are going to get what you want. What might not be so obvious is the fact that before you can change your behavior you must change your thinking. But before you can change your thinking you must change the input into your mind.

If we really do want what we *say* we want—good health, extra money, security, friends, peace of mind, happiness—we must put those positive goals into our minds. This input comes from positive friends and associates. Additional input must come from reading the right kind of books, listening to the right kind of messages, and attending educational, motivational seminars. Through these sources we plant those desirable thoughts of good health, extra money, security, friends, peace of mind, and happiness in our heads.

Buy this next thought and you will *sell* more of what you sell:

Your business is never really good or bad "out there."
Your business is either good or bad right between
your own two ears.

Example: At this moment you are in the best place at the best time to do the most selling. (Yes, that is realistic. The only time you have and are sure

of is the time you have *right now.* Since you are where you are and nowhere else, you can sell only where you are, so you are at the right place at the right time.)

Many "Gloomy Guses" and "prophets of doom" spread their gloom by periodically announcing we're headed for a business slump. Without fail, about every four or five years they announce the coming "recession." Speaker Don Hutson of Memphis, Tennessee, points out that the media has accurately predicted eighteen of the last two recessions. (You might need to think about that one.) When they announce the next recession, you've got to make a choice to join or not to join. I'm in favor of joining some clubs like the Rotary, the Lions, Civitan, and other outstanding service organizations, but personally I'm not in favor of joining the recession club.

The "Go Giver" Close

One excellent example of the right mental attitude is the story of Calvin Hunt from Victoria, Texas. Calvin became one of the really great professional life insurance salesmen in this country. A former Houston Oiler offensive lineman and an extremely creative, civic-minded citizen, Calvin used a lot of the little extras to produce business. His attitude was certainly one of his outstanding assets. Each year he would invite an inspirational speaker as a community service for the town. He reserved the front rows of the auditorium for his clients and invited the general public to occupy the remaining seats. There was no charge to anyone for this.

Calvin was one of those multimillion-dollar producers who wrote contracts involving well over $100,000 in premiums. He had a chauffeur-driven limousine, and while he was being driven to his appointments, which were sometimes 20 miles or 120 miles away, he prepared his presentation and took care of the details of his business.

He explained to me that in 1982 roughly half the insurance people felt business was down and, consequently, they reduced their efforts. Calvin did explain that business was down a little, but half of his competition was not really working to expand their businesses. Since there was about 90 percent as much business available and only 50 percent as much competition, Calvin figured his business had to increase substantially. As you might

suspect, his business did increase dramatically that year. Yes, attitude does make a difference.

11

Your Attitude toward You

If you're really interested in building your sales career, or for that matter any other kind of career, you've got to start by building a healthy self-image. One of my early mentors, the late Dr. Emol Fails of Raleigh, North Carolina, said *you don't build a business—you build people—and then people build the business.*

When we talk about closing sales we've got to face the fact that many salespeople are colorful. By colorful I mean they're yellow! They just flat don't ask for the order! They talk and talk and talk but they don't ask for the order because they have that fear of rejection. Outstanding sales trainer Chris Hegarty points out that 63 percent of all sales interviews end with no direct effort on the salesperson's part to close the sale.

The salesperson doing all the talking is desperately hoping the prospect will interrupt the presentation and say, "OK, I'll take it." This way the salesperson won't have to risk their ego by making a direct closing effort and chancing a direct refusal.

Salesperson or Professional Visitor

In my own career I've been on sales calls and watched the salesperson drone on and on and on and never get around to asking for the order. I've even heard prospects say, "Well, John, you're not trying to sell me something, are you?" And the salesman would verbally back away and say, "Oh, noooo, noo, no!" Makes you wonder who he thought he was and what he thought he was doing, doesn't it? Apparently he thought he was a

professional visitor. If that's what you think you are, then this chapter will be very important to you.

Now as I understand it, the purpose of the sales interview, whether you go to see the prospect or they come to see you, is to get the order. Yet because of poor self-image and this fear of rejection, 63 percent of all sales interviews wind down and drift into oblivion without a *direct effort* to close the sale.

So important is your self-image in improving your closing skills and effectiveness that I want to digress for a moment and give you a sales talk on doing something about your own self-image. If you have a problem with yours, and you are the *only* person who *really* knows whether you do or not, I urge you to get busy and do something about it.

One of the many steps you can take toward building a healthy self-image is for you to take a good public-speaking course. The ability to express yourself on your feet is one of the greatest confidence-builders known to man. Chances are excellent your church, community college, or school offers such a course. And programs such as Toastmasters and the Dale Carnegie courses are also excellent image-builders.

Another surefire step in building a good self-image is to become an expert, a real pro, in your chosen profession of selling. A quick count will reveal well over one hundred closes in this book. Learn those that specifically apply to you and your selling situation. Even more important than learning them, *live them.* Make them a part of you. Adapt them for your own use and you will feel a surge of confidence—your image will improve because you know that in a sales situation the odds are great you are going to come out "smelling like a rose." With improved effectiveness your love for selling will be even greater, because an important key to maintaining a good attitude is to *know* what you are doing.

Make Certain the Neighborhood Is Safe

Perhaps this next example will bring to life for you the absolute necessity of building your self-image if you really expect to build an outstanding sales career. In this example I use real estate, but it could apply to any product or salesperson who goes out after business.

Let's assume you have a poor self-image. You're out working your "farm" or territory one morning when you see a FOR SALE BY OWNER sign in the yard. You circle the block three times to make absolutely certain the neighborhood is safe. (You should be careful, shouldn't you?) You finally decide the neighborhood is safe, so you knock on the door (timidly, I might add). The homeowner comes to the door and you start your presentation. After about two sentences she says, "Just a minute. Let me ask you a question. Do you sell real estate? Just answer yes or no."

You confess that you do sell real estate, so the homeowner says, "I'm just not interested. I'm going to tell you the same thing I told the last two people who came by here selling real estate. I'm going to sell this house myself. I planted every bush, every shrub, every tree in this yard, and I'm not going to give you thousands of dollars for selling my house when I know a lot more about the house than you will ever know. Furthermore, I don't want to hear any more about it!" And she closes the door in your face.

Poor Image Is the Problem

Now remember, you've got a poor self-image. You don't like you and that homeowner *sure* doesn't like you! Chances are a hundred to one you will *react* with, "Poor little me! Nobody likes me!" So what do you do? You do the only thing you can. You go to the coffee shop for a cup of coffee. While you're drinking the first cup, you realize what you really need is a second cup. As you slowly drink that second cup of coffee, you come to some "interesting" conclusions.

"Why didn't I think about this before? It is so obvious! What I've got to do is go back to the office, make all the telephone calls I need to make, clean up all the details on my desk, handle all the correspondence, and do all of my service work. After all, you just can't sell with a bunch of nagging details hanging over you. Monday morning I'll get out there with a clean mind and no nagging details so I'll knock 'em dead! Besides, it's already Wednesday!"

Let me tell you something. Ninety-eight percent of the people who procrastinate have image problems. They just don't want to get out and face the possible rejection every salesperson alive faces every time they make a call. People reject salespeople—desks don't—so it's safe to go hide behind

that desk, a golf club, or for that matter, *another* planning session. Don't misunderstand. I believe in planning and taking care of details, but after a certain point (like eating alphabet soup in alphabetical order or proofreading a photocopy) planning becomes an escape from action to avoid rejection. *If you're overorganized, with more records on less business than you should have, now is the time to take action.*

Good Image Is the Solution

Now let's look at this illustration under identical circumstances, but with one important change. This time you have a good, healthy self-image. You are in the same neighborhood and you see the FOR SALE BY OWNER sign in the yard. So you go knock on the door. The same homeowner comes to the door, and after a brief but unpleasant dialogue she closes the door in your face.

This time, however, you *respond* because you have a good, healthy self-image. You understand *it's the lady who has the problem;* you are not personally incapacitated. As a result, you go down the street and find a prospect who does not have a problem!

I'm confident you've heard—maybe even made—the statement "*He* makes me so mad" or "*She* makes me so mad." Let's set the record straight on that one. As any psychologist will tell you, "You can't stir soup unless there's soup in the pot." Others don't put "mad" in you, but if it's there they can stir it up, *if* you *choose* to let them. It's up to you to decide whether you are going to invite them to come in and tell you how to think, how to act, and how to feel.

From My Sales Notebook

Let me share some personal experiences to emphasize the point that *the salesperson's self-image has a direct bearing on their sales success*. As a young salesman, when I was out knocking on doors, I would often have a prospect in one house, another prospect next door, and yet another prospect twenty miles down the highway. I would make the call at the first house, and if I were rejected by that prospect, I used an amazing ability I had. Let

me explain. As a young salesman I could actually look at the *outside* of a house and tell you if it was the "right psychological moment" to make the call. In my imagination I could see them eating lunch, taking a nap, having a knock-down-drag-out fight, or 101 other things which I used to justify *not* making the call on the prospect next door.

What would I do? Very simple. I'd get into my car and drive twenty miles down the highway to see another prospect. How could I justify that? Easy. I needed the driving time to "plan" what I was going to say when I got there. (After all, I had been rejected on the previous call because I had not properly "planned" what I said.) I was justifying the fact that I was "working" during that twenty-mile drive.

The point is obvious and hopefully helpful. I had a poor self-image. I had rejected myself. In my mind the prospect in the first house had rejected me, and I wasn't ready to go next door for another rejection. One more time. *Improve your self-image and you will improve your sales performance.*

"They" Can't Make You Feel Inferior—without Your Permission

When your self-image is solid, you can go from one prospect to the next many times, almost regardless of the reception you get. (I'll be the first to admit that *everyone* has a limit to the number of rejections they can handle. That's the reason I frequently make reference to building your self-image and listening to helpful audio messages regularly, especially after being refused/rejected forcefully several times.)

As a salesperson it will help you enormously from an image point of view to understand this paraphrase of what Eleanor Roosevelt said: *Nobody on the face of this earth can make you feel inferior without your permission.* Once you get your image right—and that's what everything I teach is directly or indirectly aimed at doing—then your sales world *and* your personal world will improve. The late Dr. Maxwell Maltz, plastic surgeon and author of *Psychocybernetics*, said the purpose of all psychotherapy is to build the self-esteem, that is, the image, of the patient.

Obviously, I'm not talking about a superinflated "I AM THE GREATEST" kind of self-image. (Actually, that's the opposite of a healthy self-image. The "I AM THE GREATEST" chest thumper is, in almost every

case, manifesting a poor self-image.) Most people think of that individual as being conceited, which is a disease that makes everybody sick—except the person who has it!

All great salespeople have strong (not inflated) egos. They cease to be great when the ego has them!

I'm talking about a good, healthy self-image of self-acceptance. When you can accept yourself, with your own faults and shortcomings, it's much easier for you to understand and communicate (I didn't say *agree*) with other people—including your prospects. Your self-image *is* important, so build a good one and you will be able to build your sales career bigger, better, and faster.

Regardless of where you are in your sales career, and regardless of what your self-image might be at this moment, I believe as far as the sales profession is concerned that I've walked in your shoes and felt your feelings. I don't believe any one of you who will ever read this has ever been "broker," "scareder," more uncertain, more apprehensive, or more doubtful about what tomorrow has to offer than I was. I don't believe you have ever been any further down in the dumps or dreaded that initial approach any more than when I first entered the world of selling. I say all of this to give you my personal assurance that there is hope for *you.*

12

Your Attitude toward Others

The third phase of attitude I wish to share with you is your attitude toward others. How do you really view that person you're dealing with across the counter? Are they someone you can "make a buck" by selling to, or do they represent a person with a problem which you can help solve? Are you really thoughtful and considerate of them, or is your main focus on making the sale and reaping the benefits for yourself?

As a practical matter, I challenge you to observe the personal qualities and characteristics of the top-performing men and women in the sales and business world as well as the political and religious world. You will discover that almost without exception they all adhere to the same philosophy: Be nice.

How do you see your relationship with your prospect? Do you think of yourself as a friend, as someone who truly can help and advise the other person, someone who looks after the interests of the prospect? Do you buy the idea that they profit most who serve best? I hope you do, because in the world of selling the way to build customers is to build a winning relationship with the people with whom you are dealing.

According to an *Austin Business Journal* article by Jill Griffin, the average company in America loses a minimum of 20 percent of its customers annually. Some companies, such as car dealerships and internet service providers, experience up to a 50 percent turnover. Griffin explained that the best way to win the war on customer turnover is to ensure that the customer never leaves in the first place. I contend this is done by building winning relationships from the very first contact.

Everybody, including coaches, dentists, household executives, ministers, builders, interior designers, etc., sells, and everything is selling. With that in mind, it simply makes sense to become a highly productive professional.

One interesting discovery by The Forum Corporation was that the high performers were just as thorough in their sales-and-service approach with members of the internal staff as they were with customers. Since salespeople—even high-performance ones—generally have no subordinates, they get their work done through others over whom they have little or no direct control. They practice good human relations and sell the support people at the home office on shipping, installing, servicing, and generally just helping them (the high performers) please the customers. This enables the high performer to keep their commitments to the customer and demonstrates to the customer that they, the top performer, are a person who can be trusted and is dependable.

Making a serious effort to keep our customer makes good economic sense for two important reasons. According to Larry J. Rosenberg and John A. Czepiel, writing in the March 1984 issue of *The Journal of Consumer Marketing*, a lost customer reduces average company profits by $118 compared with a $20 cost to keep the customer satisfied.[1] And those are 1984 figures! Imagine what the cost is today! Despite this fact, it is estimated that the average company spends six times as much to get a new customer as it does to hold a current one.

I might also add that if a customer leaves disgruntled, they will personally tell an average of eleven other people about the *problem.* That can really be costly.

Incidentally, *losers* think in terms of "replacing" customers; *winners* think in terms of maintaining customers *and* adding new ones in order to build the business bigger and better.

Let me bluntly state if that is your attitude as you deal with your prospect, you're not going to sell or earn nearly as much. Earlier I emphasized the point that selling is a "transference" of feeling. I also made the point that your prospect picks up the feeling of greed and self-interest and you ring up another "no sale."

This story identifies the winning (you *and* the customer) attitude: Several years ago, while bowling in Omaha, Nebraska, I injured my right knee. One of my friends, whose elevator doesn't quite reach the top, made some catty reference to my age. My friend wasn't overly bright or he would have recognized that the left knee was exactly the same age as the right knee, and it was in good shape, so obviously my age had no bearing on the condition of my right knee!

Not long after I injured the knee, I was scheduled to speak in San Francisco to about twenty-five hundred people. After the introduction, as I came hobbling onstage, I could *feel* that audience thinking to themselves, *For goodness sake! Just look at Zig! Bless his heart, he's all crippled up, but I'll bet he's going to do the best he can.* As a speaker I could *feel* the feeling of the audience.

To be candid, I'll have to confess that to this day I don't quite understand the therapeutic value of a microphone around the neck. Apparently there is some medicinal value, because when they put that mike around my neck, my knee quit hurting! For the next sixty-five minutes I was up and down, around and about, stooping, squatting, shouting, whooping, hollering, and doing all the things my audiences are accustomed to seeing me do. During the entire sixty-five minutes, I never felt a pain. I finished making the talk, stepped down off the stage, and the knee collapsed, causing me to fall.

Selling Is a Win-Win Situation

I daresay you know exactly what happened. For sixty-five minutes I was not thinking about Ziglar and his knee. I was thinking about my prospects and how I could help them solve their problems. I did not do this consciously, but subconsciously. When I finished making the talk, I relaxed inside. It was like I said to myself, "OK, Ziglar, you can forget about all those people. Think about yourself." When my thoughts turned inward toward self instead of outward toward helping others, I fell flat on my face.

The same thing will happen to you. Don't misunderstand. I'm highly skeptical of people who adjust their halos and claim, "I sell my product just because I love to help people." (I notice that they always cash their commission checks!) I hasten to add that I like to help people, too, but all of us are alike in one respect. If our company quit paying us for selling, then financial necessity would force us to quit helping people by selling our products or services, regardless of the depth of our belief and regardless of our love for what we do.

When you talk to a prospect, you ought to be wrapped up in solving their problem, because in the process you will definitely be reaching your own sales and career objectives. This attitude in selling definitely puts you *and* your customer in a win-win situation.

To develop this attitude which leads to building a winning relationship with your customer, let's take a look at what DeMarco and Maginn of The Forum Corporation discovered about how the customers of high performers see the top producer and their role. [2]

As "King" Customer Sees the Salesperson (Forum Report)

The customer sees the high-performing sales professional as a person who is genuinely interested in the customer's needs, even while they actively promote their company's own position. This "balance" encourages clients to share confidential information trustingly, knowing the sales representative will try to understand their concerns and be fair in their dealings. The customer sees the high performer as one who *exchanges* information rather than as one who simply gives sales presentations from their perspective.

The high performer is sensitive to the value of the customer's time and is able to spend more *quality* time in front of the customer because they spend more quality time planning strategy and preparing for the call. Customers perceive this and value it highly. They are aware of the personal pressures and needs faced by the customer and sell to these *people*, not to companies.

One myth—that a salesperson should not get involved with customer concerns other than the purpose of the sales call—was exploded, as was the concept that price isn't important and that you should "promise them anything" to close a sale. Customers want and expect their salespeople to be able to act as trustworthy resources who respond directly and provide them expertise, backed by effective recommendations. *One significant characteristic of the high producer is their willingness to explain product drawbacks.*

To customers, the salesperson who is enthusiastic and interested in working with them to solve problems rates as a more successful performer than one who does not. A salesperson who builds relationships and provides a valuable service, whether advice, information, or opinion, is unequivocably considered a high performer by the customer and can penetrate an organization at several levels. Customers feel the basic sales-skills training prevalent in industry today needs to be continued. Product knowledge, competitive knowledge, and the so-called face-to-face skills

(selling features/benefits, handling objections, etc.) are still prerequisites for the sales job.

A word to the wise should be sufficient. If you listen to what the customers of the top producers have to say, your chances of joining the ranks of the top producers are greatly enhanced.

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1. Larry J. Rosenberg and John A. Czepiel, *The Journal of Consumer Marketing*, March 1984, 45–51.

2. I'm deeply indebted to The Forum Corporation of Boston, Massachusetts, for making the study done by William M. DeMarco, PhD, and Michael D. Maginn, Ed.D., available to me. These researchers did a study involving 12 "Fortune 1300" companies with large sales forces from 6 industries (high-tech, banking, petro-chemical, insurance, pharmaceutical, and communications). The study involved 341 carefully selected salespeople—173 high performers and 168 moderate performers. They acquired 44,741 pieces of data over a period of 14 months. Information from their findings is scattered and identified throughout the book.

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Your Attitude toward the Sales Profession

Selling is the best-paying hard work and the lowest-paying easy work in the world. For those who "get in selling" and then let selling "get in them," the sales profession offers an exciting, rewarding, and demanding career. What the late Fred Herman titled his excellent book on selling is true: *Selling Is Simple (Not Easy).* So let's take a comprehensive look at this profession which has been my life since I sold vegetables and milk door-to-door when I was eight years old.

Large numbers of salespeople are enthusiastic about the product they sell. They believe their company is the greatest and they're pleased to be affiliated with the people who represent the company. However, a high percentage of these salespeople are hesitant to admit they sell for a living. I'm going to make a big deal out of this point, because your *total* attitude toward yourself—your prospects, your product, your company, *and* the profession of selling—will often determine whether you make or miss the sale. This is especially true on the close ones. Although this chapter will not include any techniques in selling per se, it will be enormously helpful in closing the close ones.

Be Proud You Sell

I'm proud to be a salesman for many reasons. I believe America is a great nation because we are a nation of salespeople. America was discovered by a salesman. Not by any stretch of the imagination could you accuse Christopher Columbus of being a navigator. History records that he was

looking for a short route to India. He missed it by about twelve thousand miles and still went back home and told them he had found it. Where I come from, that's not navigation.

You might say, "Well, that still doesn't prove he was a salesman." True, but think about this: First of all, he was an Italian in Spain, so he was speaking a foreign language. By most territorial assignments he was *way* out of his sales territory. He had only one prospect to call on, so if he missed the sale, he would have had a long swim home. To say the least, that's pressure selling!

The "Columbus" Close

He called on Isabella and told his story. After listening to his presentation, Isabella said, "That sounds like a good idea, Chris, but twelve thousand dollars for five little ships is ridiculous!" (Till this day many people don't realize they started with five ships—but two of them *did* go over the side!) Columbus heard the money objection Isabella raised, but since he heard what she said *and* what she was saying (page 102), he knew that money wasn't the problem.

He instantly recognized that she was not sold on all the advantages of being the one to discover the short route to India. He knew she felt the cost was greater than the benefit, and common sense dictated that neither Isabella nor any other prospect would pay more for something than she felt it was worth. With this in mind, Chris put on his sales shoes and started painting pictures of all the good things that would happen to her nation and the recognition she would get if she were responsible for discovering that short route to India.

Columbus pointed out the colonization possibilities among the lands which were sure to be discovered. He stressed the savings in time, the possibilities of new and unknown foods, spices, gems, and furs. Undoubtedly Chris reminded her that she would be able to spread the Christian message to the "savages" beyond the horizon. I'm confident he painted the picture of Spain's getting a significant jump on France and England in their competition for world domination.

When the factual/emotional sales presentation had ended and the decision ball was in the air (a *lot* was at stake on this sales call, wasn't it?), Isabella said, "OK, Chris, I'm sold. The only problem is I don't have any money." With this, Columbus looked at her and said, "Look, Izzy," (since I was not there, I'm not sure this is verbatim) "you've got that string of beads hanging around your neck. Let's take 'em down to the pawnshop and hock 'em and we'll finance this deal."

Your history book will tell you they did have to use unusual methods to raise the money to finance the trip. Once the voyage was under way, Columbus still had to do a lot of selling. History records that the sailors daily threatened to throw him overboard and sail back home. Since Columbus was selling for his life, I'm confident his daily sales presentation was heavy on the conviction side. Few salesmen in history have had the need to be *trusted* as Columbus had. On a daily basis he had to *sell* in order to *sail.* Then one morning the call came forth, "Land, ho!" And Christopher Columbus had "landed" the most profitable sales call in history.

Tell Your Customers You Love Them

Then Christopher Columbus did what salespeople too often have a tendency to do, and in the process he made the biggest mistake of his sales career. *He did not service the account.* He apparently assumed that since it was *his* idea and *he* had been the one to open such incredible opportunity doors, *he* would be forever remembered—and rewarded.

If you have just started your sales career, I'd like to inform you that it doesn't work that way. If you're an experienced pro in the sales world, I hope I don't need to remind you it doesn't work that way. The reason is competition, the majority of which is legitimate. Competitors are ever present, and they are going to be wooing and courting *your* customers (you do feel possessive, don't you?) with their best foot forward at all times.

When you make the sale you are in the enviable position of being in the driver's seat, but when you take your eye off the road (the customer) and your foot off the gas pedal (service), competition starts selling the idea they are better drivers and have more and better gas.

Service—the Key to a Sales Career

In Columbus's case, the "competition" was Amerigo Vespucci. He started selling and servicing the account. Result: we did not become the United States of Columbus; we became the United States of *America* because Columbus didn't service the account.

The "Courtship" Close

I'm personally convinced this is an important factor in the breakup of many marriages. The guy and the gal put a sales story on each other during the courtship (sales) process like you just flat cannot believe! All during the courtship, each one is on his or her "best behavior" routine at all times. Each one makes and honestly strives to keep commitments and promises. Each one puts, and keeps, that best foot forward. He showers and puts on all that good, masculine cologne, and she bathes and puts on that sweet-smelling stuff. Each one is always prompt, always thoughtful and considerate—until finally they talk each other into the trip down the aisle!

Now Things Change

Then they quit courting. Oh, they don't quit the day after the honeymoon, or even the week or month after, but over a period of time they gradually start phasing out those thoughtful, loving, considerate little actions for each other. They begin to abandon some of their good grooming habits. They gradually fade away from the thoughtful, considerate, loving acts for each other. They start letting other things and other activities enter into the picture. Don't misunderstand—I'm not implying that marriage can maintain the same ecstasy the honeymoon did, but I do believe that courtship and courtesy are absolute musts for the marriage not only to endure but to be exciting and meaningful for each other as well.

I believe in most cases when we lose a customer to competition it is not because of a better price or a better product, though obviously that can enter the picture. In most cases it is because competition came in and "courted"

our customer as we had “courted” them before the “marriage” (sale) with better service, more interest, more concern, and more attentive listening to the needs of *our* customer.

To tie the sales and courtship examples together, someone rhetorically asked, “When should you tell your wife you love her?” And the wit said, “Before somebody else does!” When should you tell your customers you love them? The same answer—before somebody else does! *Then* you should demonstrate your sincerity by showing that love through service.

Columbus did not service the account, but that does not alter the fact that we were *discovered* by a salesman and *named* after a salesman. We were *populated* by a salesman. Sir Walter Raleigh toured the coffeehouses of London selling those ignorant, fearful, superstitious people on the idea they should leave the security of England and come into America where they would have religious freedom and a chance to become landowners. Many of them bought that idea, so America was at least partially populated by that salesman.

George Was a Salesman

We were *freed* by a salesman. Do you fully realize what a tremendous sales job George Washington did in gaining our independence? At that time, America was almost equally divided into three factions. One-third of the colonists wanted their independence, one-third wanted to stay with Britain, and one-third said, “Look, George, whichever side wins is the one we’re going to go with. During the conflict we’ll stay neutral, but when the danger is past and the winner is established, we will throw in with that winner. You can depend on our doing exactly that.”

George Washington had to get his recruits for the Continental army from the farmers, merchants, backwoodsmen, seamen, laborers, and shipbuilders. He had to be candid and say, “Gentlemen, if we win, I’m probably not going to be able to pay you, and if we lose, you’ll be hung from the highest tree as traitors.” Please remember that only one-third of the colonists actually wanted independence and *all* of them knew that England had the most powerful army *and* navy in the world. Yes, Washington’s recruiting (sales) job was formidable.

I mention this again to let those of you who do any recruiting know that your job is simple by comparison. Suppose you had to tell your prospective recruits that every sales call they made would be on a prospect who had never bought anything from anybody. Furthermore, even if they (the new recruits) did make a sale, there would be no funds to pay them, but if they missed the sale they would be shot at sunrise. Yup, George Washington was quite a salesman!

Salespeople Are Important

We became an ocean-to-ocean nation and an international power as a direct result of salespeople. Once we had won our independence, Alexander Hamilton persuaded President Washington to petition Congress for an appropriation so we could study the methods the British had used to set up colonies and "agents" to merchandise their products and services around the world. At this point, though we had been settled since 1608, in the ensuing 168 years we had made it only to the Appalachian Mountains.

With independence and the benefits of the knowledge acquired because of the appropriation, we were moved to set up trading posts manned by salesmen so that when settlers started moving westward they were able to obtain gunpowder, blankets, and supplies. Because of these trading-post salesmen, just thirty years after we won our independence, America had made it all the way to the West Coast.

Salespeople Make the Difference

Yes, America is the greatest land on this earth because of the salespeople. We definitely are not the greatest because of our size, because Canada, Russia, and China are all larger than America. It is not because of our great natural resources, though we have certainly been abundantly blessed in this area. Realistically Russia, China, Canada, and other nations all have tremendous natural resources.

It's not because of our technological superiority. The Japanese, Germans, Swiss, Russians, and Israelis are our masters in some areas of technological development. In my mind it is crystal clear. We've been able to do what

we've done because of salespeople and our free enterprise structure and our freedom of religion.

Salespeople Are Secure

I suppose one of the reasons I'm so tremendously excited about the profession is because of the security it offers. Should my own son come to me and ask what I consider the most secure job in the world, I would unhesitatingly say to him that it is a sales job. He, as well as you, might well labor under the illusion that salespeople are the only people who work entirely on commission. This illusion would naturally provoke the question "Does this really offer security?"

The answer is yes, it does offer real security, and all jobs are commission jobs. My executive assistant—and for that matter, every other person in our society—is literally on commission. The salesperson and everybody else, whether they receive a salary or are paid a commission, is *working* on commission.

Eventually, regardless of what the job might be, if production is not maintained, then the security of the job is taken away. So whether you are on salary or commission, you are on commission even if you happen to be the president of the United States. As you might have heard, if the president doesn't do well, even they will lose their job. 'Nuff said.

The sales job offers security, and I remind you of that security with this example. Back in 1981–82 we had a recession. At that time there were literally tens of thousands of honest, sincere, dedicated, conscientious, hardworking, productive people who lost their jobs. They came from every walk of life—teachers and superintendents, airline pilots and flight attendants, waitpersons and secretaries, lawyers, street sweepers, and service people. They lost their jobs not because they were unwilling to work, not because they did not have the ability, but because of the economy.

Here's my challenge: Name one, just one, honest, sincere, dedicated, conscientious, hardworking, productive salesperson who lost their job. If a salesperson did lose their job for reasons beyond their control such as, for example, their company's going out of business, they could in most cases go down the street—or even next door—and almost immediately gain employment.

New Jobs Immediately Available

Never shall I forget an incident in Atlanta, Georgia, when I was conducting a sales seminar. Just before the seminar started, two well-dressed young men in their late twenties came and asked if they could get a refund on their tickets. They explained that they had just lost their sales jobs because of a personality conflict with their manager. Since they had no sales jobs, to learn additional sales techniques would be of little or no value to them (they obviously had momentarily lost perspective and did not realize that they now—more than ever—needed their sales skills and training to *sell* their way into another job).

I asked the two young salesmen two questions. Number one, "Do you like to sell?" They both replied in the affirmative. Number two, "Would you like another sales job?" They again replied in the affirmative. Then I assured the two young men that before the evening was over I would have a dozen interviews for sales jobs for them if they attended the session.

That evening when I reached this point in the presentation concerning the security of the sales job, I asked the audience two questions. Number one, "How many of you are in sales management?" Roughly one hundred of the five hundred hands went up. Question number two, "How many of you would be interested in interviewing two enthusiastic young salesmen who present an excellent appearance and are sold on the profession of selling but lost their jobs because of a personality conflict with their manager?" Something like seventy-five hands went up. The two young men were able to pick and choose from a dozen solid offers as to what they wanted to do.

Yes, selling is a secure profession.

General Douglas MacArthur defined security as the ability to produce. As long as you can produce, my selling friend, you have financial and career security.

Attitude Makes the Difference

The sales profession has a different attitude about life and business. In the nonsales community, when business drops, management generally calls a

“pity party.” To zero in on all the difficulties, management explains they are going to have to cut the lights off early and let a couple of the janitors, secretaries, and support personnel go. With a stiff upper lip they explain that despite the fact things are tough, “We’re going to fight this—and hope for the best.”

The sales world handles recessions differently. When the media announces a recession, management gets everybody together and says, “We know you’ve been hearing all about the recession, but we’ve figured out a foolproof way to beat it. All we’ve got to do is reduce our sales.” Right? Wrong!

What management does is simple. They call a management conference to organize a sales meeting to end all sales meetings. The president, board chairman, and sales manager are primed and rarin’ to go. They get the troops together, roll out the red carpet, and in a highly excited manner say, “Folks, we know all of you have been hearing the completely unfounded rumor about a recession. Well, let me tell you what we think about recessions. We think they are definitely between your ears! Recessions are like a lot of other things. You can either join them or refuse to join. It is our current company policy not to join.

“Let me tell you what we *are* going to do. We’re going to put on a contest like you have never seen before in your life! We’re going to put up prizes like you can’t believe. We’re going to offer incentives to our customers and to you as salespeople which will make everybody so ecstatically happy and excited that they’ll end up praying for any so-called recession to continue. We’re going to embark on a promotion and advertising campaign that will absolutely blow your mind! We’re going to get each one of you involved in a sales training and a motivational program which will increase your effectiveness and productivity dramatically. We’re going to sell more and better than ever before.”

Think about This

Is this approach realistic? Is it effective? I’ll answer that with questions for those of you who have been in sales since 1990 or before. Did you make more money in 1991 than you did in 1990? Did you make more money in 1992 than you did in 1991? (Remember now, those were “recession” years.)

Are you making more money now than you've ever made before in the world of selling? (Author's note: I've been asking those questions in front of my live audiences since 1976, and I can tell you there is always a substantial number who are doing better and better, regardless of the national market.)

It's true: If our thinking is stinking, our business is going to be in the same shape. *Keep your thinking right and your business will be right.*

Good Morning, Mr. Chairman

When you get up in the morning and look in the mirror, you're looking directly into the eyes of your chairman of the board, your president, your secretary-treasurer, and your janitor. You can now make a motivational speech to your entire staff. "You're such a nice guy," or "You're such a nice girl. You deserve a raise," and the board just met! As Cavett Robert loved to say, "The raise is going to become effective just as soon as you do!" That's what I like about the profession of selling.

I'm always amused when presidential candidates debate about who is going to run this country. I say this because the salespeople of America control the economy of this country. Just in case you question the validity of that statement, read on.

Things Happen When You Sell

Have you, my selling friend, ever really given any thought to what happens when you make a sale? First of all, you make a profit, your manager makes a profit, and if you're lucky, your company makes a profit. That way it can stay in business and you can keep on selling.

To paraphrase Samuel Gompers, one of the founders of the labor movement, "The first responsibility of management is to make a profit, because if you don't make a profit then the company will go out of business. If that happens, the workers not only won't get a raise, they won't even have jobs! Your company *must* make a profit because when they do, everyone benefits."

Lots of People Benefit

I'd like to briefly trace what happens when you make a sale. You take part of your profits, go to the grocery store, and buy a can of beans. The grocery man in essence says, "If you're going to buy my beans, I've got to get some more," so he goes to the wholesaler and buys more beans. The wholesaler keeps the ball rolling by saying, "If you're going to buy my beans, I've got to get some more," so he goes to the cannery and buys more beans. The cannery needs more beans, so the manager goes to the farmer and buys more beans. This depletes the farmer's supplies, which means he's got to raise more beans. The farmer has a problem because he has worn out his tractor raising beans. Down to the tractor dealer he goes to buy that new tractor. Since the dealer only has one tractor, he has to go to the tractor factory to get more tractors.

When the dealer placed his order for more tractors, the tractor-factory manager said, "If you're going to buy more tractors, we will have to manufacture some more, because you are taking all our inventory. In order to manufacture more tractors, we have to bring in iron, copper, plastic, steel, aluminum, zinc, lead, spark plugs, and rubber tires. We will also have to give out over one hundred subcontracts for the parts we don't manufacture ourselves." All those events, all those sales, and all those jobs were created because one day you, my selling friend, got out and made a sale!

Salespeople Make It Happen

If *anybody* should make a negative comment or a belittling statement about the sales profession, you should look that person in the eye and earnestly say, "Friend, you are earning as much money as you are because I and thousands of others are in the sales profession." This is true whether that person is a postman or a postmistress, a private or a general, a teacher or a superintendent. *Our standard of living is high because of the free enterprise system, and the salesperson is the heart and soul of that system.*

Several years ago the secretary of commerce of the United States said that what we need in our country today is one million *more* professional salespeople. The reason he made the statement is obvious. *When the salesperson sells, the wheels of industry turn.*

Salespeople Are Nice Folks

When the average person understands the role the salesperson plays, our role as salespeople will be much easier. When you as a salesperson fully understand the importance of the sales profession, you are going to be even more excited about your role in the profession. As a group, we truly represent the best of middle America and are truly privileged to be part of a noble profession.

A natural question or thought on your part at this point could be, “If those facts are true, then why do so many people have a negative image of the salesperson?” In my opinion there are several reasons for this. In the early days the advent of the less-than-professional hustler known as the “Yankee peddler” gave the profession a bad name.

From that point many people got the idea that a “good” salesperson was a person who made someone buy something they didn’t want or—even worse—made them want something they really didn’t need. In the beginning, the average buyer did not understand (many of them still do not) that a professional salesperson is a counselor who identifies the prospect’s needs and then fills those needs through their goods, products, or services.

Security, Longevity, and Fulfillment

Career benefits for the professional salesperson are enormous. With the possible exception of those in the ministry and symphony conductors, salespeople have the longest active career of any of the professions. I started before I was eight years old and expect to continue for many more years.

Victor Christen of South Pasadena, California, was still going strong at age ninety-four. He, at that point, had been selling automobiles for seventy-eight years and was a top salesman for Colliau Chevrolet. Since his health was good he didn’t even think of slowing down, much less retiring.

The exciting thing about the sales profession is that the longer you sell the more effective you become. The mental gymnastics required in selling will keep you mentally alert, and the longer you sell the more client loyalty and hence residual income you create. Since your integrity is the most important factor in building customer loyalty and career stability, the

practicality of a totally honest relationship becomes even more obvious. When the salesperson establishes trust and rapport with their customers, some magnificently beautiful things happen to that sales career.

You Can Get an Early Start

The wonderful thing about selling is that you can get such an early start in the profession. Larry Hawes is a classic case. Larry got his Social Security card at age ten, but at that point he'd already been selling for three years. His mother had paid him off with candy to walk up and down the sidewalk wearing a sandwich board in front of the lighting store she managed. At age eleven he was getting two dollars per hour as a stock boy at the store but couldn't resist the temptation to sneak into the showroom occasionally to sell a few lamps. During one of these ventures, he sold one shopper a three-hundred-dollar brass lamp.

When Sandra Jennings opened her window-treatment shop called "The Blind Spot," specializing in ready-made and custom-made blinds, verticals, and draperies, Larry was fourteen and his brother, Jay, was sixteen, but they were the first salespeople she hired. The Blind Spot had seven employees, and sixteen-year-old Larry was the top salesperson, averaging fifty thousand dollars a month in sales. Store manager Lois Sparks said, "You can depend on Larry to get the job done and done right. He has the self-confidence to sell well and very few of the customers realize Larry is only sixteen because he appears and acts much older."

Sandra Jennings is her entrepreneurial son's biggest booster. "He's plugged into business," she said of the youngest of her four children. "His sixth sense tells him not to let a single customer get away. He's a fast learner, pays attention to everything around him, and loves people. He's incredibly curious and he's done everything—measured windows, installed blinds and drapes, etc."

"Selling isn't difficult," according to Larry. "It's really very easy when you know your product and have a purpose. People come into the store either to price, buy, or compare brands and styles. My job is to show them everything so they'll walk away feeling confident in The Blind Spot, and in their final selection."

Larry is a young man with a very definite purpose. “I want to be rich,” he says, with great seriousness. “I’d like to be a private investor, buy and sell homes for investment purposes, stocks, oil, own a string of businesses, maybe a department store and chain of restaurants. Working is an upper to me, and I feel incredible after I make a good sale. This is especially true on a Saturday when everybody’s working extra hard to reach a particular sales goal.” Larry doesn’t describe himself as a workaholic, but he does always want to meet or beat the goals he has set, and the challenge and excitement of selling are important factors in his work.

Select a product or service that solves problems and in which you completely believe. Make certain the company is morally and financially sound. Become a sales professional and commit yourself to a 100 percent effort, and I’ll guarantee you can write your own ticket in the world of selling. Be *proud* that you sell! The profession of selling *is* a proud profession. When your attitude reaches the point that you can look with complete pride at your product, your company, and the service you sell, as well as the profession of selling, when you see the sales profession as a truly glorious one, then you will close more of the close ones. You’ll be building a career, which means you will win big now and win bigger later on.

I Am a Salesman

I am proud to be a salesman because more than any other man I, and millions of others like me, built America.

The man who builds a better mousetrap—or a better *anything*—would starve to death if he waited for people to beat a pathway to his door. Regardless of how good or how needed the product or service might be, it has to be sold.

Eli Whitney was laughed at when he showed his cotton gin. Edison had to install his electric light free of charge in an office building before anyone would even look at it. The first sewing machine was smashed to pieces by a Boston mob. People scoffed at the idea of railroads. They thought that even traveling thirty miles an hour would stop the circulation of the blood! McCormick strived for fourteen years to get people to use his reaper. Westinghouse was considered a fool for stating that he could stop a train with wind. Morse had to plead before ten Congresses before they would even look at his telegraph.

The public didn’t go around demanding these things; they had to be sold!

They needed thousands of salesmen, trailblazers, and pioneers—people who could persuade with the same effectiveness as the inventor could invent. Salesmen took these inventions, sold the public on what these products could do, taught customers how to use them, and then taught businessmen how to make a profit from them.

As a salesman I’ve done more to make America what it is today than any other person you know. I was just as vital in your great-great-grandfather’s day as I am in yours, and I will be just as vital in your great-great-grandson’s day. I have educated more people, created more jobs,

taken more drudgery from the laborer's work, given more profits to businessmen, and have given more people a fuller and richer life than anyone in history. I've dragged prices down, pushed quality up, and made it possible for you to enjoy the comforts and luxuries of automobiles, radios, electric refrigerators, televisions, and air-conditioned homes and buildings. I've healed the sick, given security to the aged, and put thousands of young men and women through college. I've made it possible for inventors to invent, for factories to hum, and for ships to sail the seven seas.

How much money you find in your pay envelope next week, and whether in the future you will enjoy the luxuries of prefabricated homes, stratospheric flying of airplanes, and a new world of jet propulsion and atomic power, depends on me. The loaf of bread that you bought today was on a baker's shelf because I made certain that a farmer's wheat got to a mill, that the mill made the wheat into flour, and that the flour was delivered to your baker.

Without me the wheels of industry would come to a grinding halt. And with that, jobs, marriages, politics, and freedom of thought would be a thing of the past. I AM A SALESMAN and I'm proud and grateful that as such, I serve my family, my fellow man, and my country.

Author Unknown

Yes, the salesperson and the sales profession are both vitally important to the growth and stability of a free and even greater America.

Good News

Fortunately, the winds of change are blowing in the salesman's direction. Here's what Allan Cox, author of "The Cox Report on the American Corporation," had to say in a copyrighted interview in the magazine *U.S. News & World Report*:

The loss of status of the salesman symbolizes the distance between corporations and consumers. In the early history of American business, the heads of manufacturing and sales were the twin heroes. Then the salesman lost status even though he was and remains the link between the customer and the company. I see this trend starting to change and expect a revival in status for those in marketing and sales. We are learning that we have to get back to the customer we have neglected.

Soon a different kind of chief executive officer will rise to the head of the corporation, someone with his ear to the ground, not the exclusively financially oriented individual who tended to be king between 1965 and 1980. The new breed will be more marketing oriented, in touch with public sentiment and more sensitive to issues of social responsibility. As corporations begin to realize that society and the marketplace are one and the same, they will become more idea oriented and we will see the re-emergence of American business.

P.S.: One reason sales and marketing people will return to the chief executive's chair is business has finally learned that selling is the only thing that contributes to profit. Everything else contributes to cost.

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Building Physical "Reserves" in Selling

To repeat what I said in an earlier chapter, the most important part of the sales process is the sales*person.* For that reason, I deal with the role the salesperson plays as well as why and how you must build a physical, a spiritual, and a mental reserve. Most of the remaining space in this segment will be devoted to the mental aspects of building a knowledge reserve, but first let's look at the physical reserve, which can be enormously helpful in your sales career.

Exercise to Build Physical Reserves

Evidence is overwhelming that you must be in good physical condition if you're going to function at your best in any profession, including selling. For example, psychologists tell me that when I speak an hour I burn more raw energy than a laboring man does in an eight-hour day. (I speak at about 280 words per minute with gusts up to 550.) When I do a four-hour session, I've got to be in good physical condition because the audience (my customers) expects me to be just as enthusiastic and energetic the last few minutes as I was the first few minutes. They paid their money to come hear me, and they deserve to hear me at my best for the entire session. I feel a strong moral obligation to be physically ready to perform at my mental and emotional best. That's the only way I can "sell" them the ideas, procedures, and techniques which will make them more effective in the sales world or in life in general.

Frankly, my selling friend, you have the same moral obligation to your customers. (We've already decided the customer is the big winner, so we *owe* it to them to be in good condition to help them win.) *You need to be just as enthusiastic with the last prospect you talk to every day as you are with the first one.* This is true whether you went out to see them or they came into your store to see you. Each one deserves you at your very best. The last prospect you call on each day has the same basic needs as the first one you called on. You owe it to every prospect to be in the best physical condition possible so you can serve each one best. Obviously, age and physical handicaps are important factors, but you should develop your sales "muscles" so you can give every prospect an honest shot with an energized presentation so they will have the complete story, enthusiastically presented, to make their decision.

There are many books and methods for getting in shape and then maintaining good physical condition. In my case I find fast walking the most practical method for staying in shape, since I travel a great deal and can walk just about anywhere regardless of the weather. I've walked during torrential downpours and with the temperature as much as forty degrees below zero. (Don't misunderstand—the rain and cold were outside. I was walking inside!)

In addition to exercise we also need to eat nutritious, well-balanced meals and get a reasonable amount of sleep. If you had a multimillion-dollar racehorse, you wouldn't let him stay up half the night smoking cigarettes, drinking coffee or booze, and eating junk food, would you? You *would* feed him the right food and drink, and control his rest and exercise to give him a chance to perform like the Thoroughbred he is, wouldn't you?

Since you, too, are a thoroughbred with a billion-dollar body who wants to be a winner, don't you think that you deserve the same treatment so you will have a legitimate chance to win? Additionally, when you take care of your body, your mind is more alert and productive. As Vince Lombardi said, "Fatigue makes cowards of us all."

By being in excellent physical condition you will have the energy and motivation to make that one more call toward the end of the day. This is the one which makes such an enormous difference in your career. If you are physically and mentally—as well as emotionally—geared to give your best effort to the very end, you're far more likely to make that sale. You will have the extra edge in enthusiastically using one more close and making

one more effort to make one more step which will take you to the top of the sales heap and help your client in the process.

The tired salesperson at the end of the day has a tendency to rationalize away their chances for being a sales champion. If they've had a superb day, they're inclined to reason, "After all, I'm not greedy. I have had a good day. Why press my luck? By quitting early I can get a good night's rest and be sharp for tomorrow." If they've had a lousy day and they're tired, then they're inclined to say, "The way things are going, no wonder I can't sell! It'll be far better for me to call it quits today and get a fresh start tomorrow so I'll be sharp."

The successful sales pro will tell you *there is nothing that will get you ready for tomorrow like making a sale on that last call today.* Often the last sale is the one you are doubly proud of because it represents that "extra effort" you've heard so much about. Emotionally it really gets you ready and excited about the next day, so instead of being a reluctant starter the next morning, you start the new day like a tiger.

Another factor is involved here, too. According to Dr. William James, the father of American psychology, we have not only a second wind but a third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and even seventh wind. Sometimes after you think you've given it your best, as you make that last call the excitement of the effort gets to you and you feel a renewed burst of energy, excitement, and enthusiasm, and the last call turns out to be the most productive one.

Here's another, very practical, intelligently selfish reason for staying in good physical condition so you will be as enthusiastically effective the last hour of the day as you were the first hour. Insurance salesmen often say that part of what you earn should be your very own to keep and use as you see fit. You and I both agree with that statement, but as a practical matter, you probably spend the first six or seven hours every day working for everybody *except* yourself. You *pay* the grocer, the landlord, the utilities company, the service station, the insurance people, the government, the laundry, the clothier, and all the others, *but not yourself.* Now wouldn't it be a shame to go top speed all day until the last hour so that you can pay *everybody* else and then run out of steam when you start working for yourself?

From personal experience I can tell you that for every minute I invest in my exercise program, I get three to five minutes of full-speed-ahead productivity. Frankly, I have so much to do I don't have time *not* to

exercise. Take care of your health and that last hour of productivity will not only be your best hour but it will also be *yours* (the money—the satisfaction—the recognition).

My selling friend, get in shape physically, mentally, spiritually, and emotionally so you can give it your best. That's the only way you're going to get the best—or championship—results.

Time: Manage It—or Squander It. Sales trainer Don Hutson points out that a study done by S.M.E. International revealed that the second leading cause of failure in the sales profession was the improper utilization of time. Mark Gardner, whose basis of opinion comes from his time spent as an assistant vice president with E. F. Hutton and Co., Inc., is of the opinion that the average securities broker spends less than two hours each day in the actual process of selling to new or established customers. There are two, possibly three, major reasons for this. First would be a disregard for, or lack of expertise in, the field of time management. Second could be a shortage of energy which causes the salesperson to start the day late, end it early, and go at substantially less than full speed during the day or week.

The third reason could be call reluctance because of a shortage of confidence, a poor self-image, or a bad case of "stinkin' thinkin'." With the exception of time management, we are dealing with these problems by offering positive solutions. Most time-management problems are caused by poor habits and lack of direction. The others are caused by lack of knowledge and expertise.

It is safe to say that the professional closer, almost without exception, is a time miser. He knows payday comes *only* when he is in front of a prospect, so he handles the necessary details of his profession during those times when he cannot be in front of the prospect. Acquiring the knowledge and staying in shape will put *you* in front of your prospects at least one more hour every day. That hour has a huge impact on the bottom line of your financial statement.

One additional way to improve that bottom line is to have your own personal "booster" week on a quarterly, semiannual, or annual basis. A "booster" week is a total-effort week during which you give your maximum effort from early in the morning until late at night. You plan it for weeks in advance so that *nothing* interferes with a total effort on your part to spend every possible moment that week in front of prospects who can make buying decisions. Never will I forget my first booster week after I really got

started in the cookware business. The company started promoting it casually about six months in advance and gradually built the tempo until it reached its peak for the scheduled week with one solid “get ready” week to pick up momentum for the major thrust.

For the big week we booked our dinner demonstrations three weeks in advance. We gave extra incentives to our hostesses for having extra couples at their dinners. We booked pancake calls for breakfast starting at 6:00 a.m. It was a busy week. That week I conducted full demonstrations for thirty-nine couples and sold thirty-one sets of cookware. That week had a solid impact on my sales career. My confidence increased substantially as I revised my goals upward.

Total-effort weeks require tremendous physical effort, so again your physical condition is important. You might also consider involving the family in your booster week *and* the week after. Ask your family to do everything possible to remove all your normal responsibilities that week so you can concentrate on selling. Then for the next week plan something extra for the whole family, maybe a short vacation together so you can spend all of your time with them. Personal booster weeks can be good for you, good for your company, and good for your family.

Smoking on Calls Is a No-No!

Since smoking and drinking are both detrimental to our health and are enormously expensive, I personally don’t participate in either, but since this book’s primary purpose is to help you close more sales, I’ll confine my comments to the fact that if you want to sell more merchandise, you will neither smoke nor drink on sales calls.

First, let’s look at smoking. Even if your prospect is smoking and offers you one, you should turn it down. The reason is simple. It takes time to light the cigarette, a place to put the ashes, and then time to put out the cigarette. Sometime between January 1 and December 31, smoking will cost you some sales. I don’t know which ones, nor do I know how many, but based on conversations with hundreds of customers, smoking costs you a lot more than the price of the cigarette. The word is, if you are serious about building your career as fast and solidly as possible, don’t smoke and sell at the same time.

What about Drinking with a Prospect?

Many times I'm directly challenged with, "Don't you think it's all right to have a cocktail with your prospects while you talk shop?" My answer is always the same: "Nope, sure don't." Question: Suppose the prospect offers you one? The answer is still no. The questioner often persists, "So what do you say?" (For some reason the inquirer doesn't seem to understand that no *is* an answer! And that "No, *thank you*" is a courteous answer when the prospect insists that you join them for a cocktail.)

On November 26, 1972, I took my last drink, and since that day less than a dozen people have insisted or offered it the second time. On the second offer, I quietly say, "No, I really don't drink." Would you believe that about half of them reply, "Boy, I wish I didn't!"?

I did not lose a friend or a sale and I don't think they respected me any less. As a matter of fact, I believe in most cases they were possibly a little envious and even wished they, too, did not drink. I believe, although this was not my primary objective, that my standing actually improved with most of the individuals. I'm completely convinced that any sales it might have cost me were far more than replaced by the sales I gained.

Your question: "Zig, what am I going to do? Have a Coke?" Not necessarily. From time to time I think you ought to have Pepsi, 7-Up, Dr Pepper, or any of a number of other soft drinks.

Does a Cocktail Really "Sharpen You Up"?

Many times salesmen tell me, "I take a drink to be sociable and because the drink 'sharpens me up.' I really feel I gain a mental pickup." My comment: "If a cocktail sharpens *you* up, you've got to face the fact that it does the same thing for your prospect, so you still haven't gained any advantage." Unfortunately, many times the salesmen who say a drink sharpens them up actually think they believe what they say.

I say they *think* they believe the drink sharpens them up because they've never really thought about it. An honest answer to this next question will remove that thought from your mind. Here's the situation: If you think a drink sharpens you up, you obviously believe it does the same thing for others. You're facing a major operation and you want the surgeon to be at

his *sharpest* best. Question: Are you going to insist that he take a little nip just before he opens you up?

The point is clear. Don't take a drink when you're trying to persuade someone to take action. You're likely to get complacent, lose the mental sharpness, and lose the sale. Liquor is a depressant, not a stimulant.

Build a Spiritual Reserve

To enjoy a balanced success in selling and in life, we need to build a spiritual reserve. I say this without apology or hesitation despite the fact some people feel you shouldn't talk about religion and politics in business. I've weighed my position and that advice many times and have come to the same conclusion which evangelist James Robison clearly states, namely, that religion and politics are the two most important things in our lives, and if we don't *choose* to talk about them, the day will come when we will no longer have that choice. I'm not going to go into any theological discussion, nor will I devote more than a couple of paragraphs to the subject (I elaborate in my book *Confessions of a Happy Christian*), but I do feel that it's important for you to know where I'm coming from.

If I had never read the Bible or heard a preacher preach, and had only been dealing with young people on drugs, I would have a deep and total faith. I've seen hundreds of youngsters come into drug-rehabilitation programs so strung out on drugs they did not know one day from the next. They had been to psychiatrists and psychologists; they'd been in group therapy and under the care of competent professionals, with minimal results. Once these young addicts enter a program which follows the basic concept of Alcoholics Anonymous, *good* things start to happen.

This Way Out

In simple terms, here is the concept the addicts follow: First, recognize you've got a problem. Second, understand there's nothing you can do about it yourself. Third, accept the fact that you've got to have a Source of help greater than any human being can provide—God, as you understand Him. (In my own case, I'm privileged to say Jesus Christ as I *know* Him.) The

addicts are forced to accept the fact there is something greater than man, and they need to look to that greater force.

I don't know who you are as a reader, but whoever you are, wherever you live, whatever you do, I can say this to you. If it hasn't already happened in the past, it will in the future. You're going to have difficulty of some kind which neither you nor any other human being can handle. That's why a spiritual reserve is so marvelous and helpful in selling *and* even more marvelous in life.

What does this have to do with closing sales? Everything, friend. If you are in trouble and have deep personal problems, whether they are of a physical, family, mental, social, financial, spiritual, or career nature, *you are going to be primarily thinking about solving your own problems and not solving your prospect's problems.* One more time, the most important part of the sales process is the salesperson. *And* the most effective salesperson is the one who is balanced physically, mentally, and spiritually.

The Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance Company conducted a comprehensive study involving thousands of people and in excess of 1,500,000 pieces of information. They uncovered some interesting and exciting things, including the fact that the three groups in America with the highest moral values were (1) the clergy, (2) businessmen, and (3) the general public.

As a businessman, that information pleased me a great deal, but there is more. The study revealed that people with deep religious convictions are the most productive employees. Here's why. Ninety-seven percent of those who had made strong spiritual commitments carried that feeling of conviction, commitment, and loyalty to their employers with highly productive results. Not surprisingly, this parallels a study involving over 22,000 students who qualified for "Who's Who in American Schools and Colleges." Over 85 percent of these honor students said their faith in God was extremely important to them.

Not only that but a study by The Heritage Foundation found that regular worship service attendance reduces suicide, drug and alcohol abuse, crime, out-of-wedlock births, and divorce. People who attended worship services regularly were far happier and healthier, had a lower rate of depression, higher self-esteem, longer and happier marriages, and better sex. It also helps inner-city youth escape poverty. The family income difference of

those who attend worship services and those who don’t is $37,021 vs. $24,361.

Question: Why are these workers and students more productive and why will you, as a salesperson, be more productive if you have deep spiritual beliefs and strong religious values? Answer: Humans are physical, mental, and spiritual beings—and if you neglect any one of these facets, you will not be a complete person. If you are hurting or empty in one aspect of your life, it’s much tougher to be productive in the other areas. On the flip side, if you have taken care of the physical, mental, and spiritual aspects of your life, you can concentrate on the job at hand, which—in the world of selling—is selling.

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Building a Mental Reserve in Selling

The third kind of reserve is mental reserve. I'm a fight fan and even fought a couple of years in the ring. I fought just long enough to know that if I ever have any disagreements with anybody, I guarantee you that all I'm going to do is just *talk* about that disagreement.

I love the story of Jack Dempsey and Gene Tunney. When Gene Tunney retained the heavyweight championship in his fight with Jack Dempsey, he did so because he had trained by running backward. Gene Tunney was anything but a coward, but he knew when he got back into the ring with Dempsey he was going to be hit and probably hurt.

Backing Up to Go Forward

Since Gene Tunney *knew* he would get hit and hurt in the rematch with Jack Dempsey, he decided to prepare for it. He did this by running backward while doing his roadwork. When his sparring partner clobbered him, he diligently trained himself to back away. He did this many, many times. In my own limited ring experience I learned that when a fighter is hit and hurt, he instinctively tries to "git 'im!" (his opponent). At that specific moment he's less capable of "gittin' him" than at any other time. That's when he gets his platter cleaned and is often knocked out.

Tunney knew that when he got hit by Dempsey he could be stunned, go on the attack, and possibly get knocked out, so he conditioned himself to avoid this by running backward. You fight fans probably remember that in the second fight Dempsey knocked Tunney down for that famous long

count. Later, Tunney said his head was perfectly clear and he could have gotten up and gone back to war, but instead of doing that he remembered his training.

Every fighter who has ever been hurt always says, “I’m OK, I’m OK, lemme at ’im!” I’ve seen guys who were so out of it they couldn’t tell you what city they were in, but they were telling the referee they were OK! Tunney “responded” to his training instead of “reacting” when Dempsey knocked him down. He backed away and fought a holding/delaying action until his head cleared. In the next round he knocked Dempsey down and won the fight going away.

You Will Be Rejected

What does this have to do with you and building your sales career? A lot. Every day you go out to see prospects or prospects come in to see you. On occasion you can anticipate or expect to be “stunned” by firm rejections and caustic comments from prospects. It is an occupational hazard. Question: Why not build up a mental reserve so when you are rebuffed in any way by your prospect you are mentally prepared to handle the incident? Positive mental preparation in advance will help absorb the impact of dealing with negative experiences.

Positive Steps to Overcome Negative Input

You’re going to have negative poison dumped into your mind and emotions every day of your sales life. Events, people, radio, newspapers, and television all participate in the process. Combine this with the fact that in the world of selling, whether you go out to see prospects or the prospects come in to see you, a certain percentage of them will deal with you in a negative manner.

To be at your most effective best in the sales profession, you need to build a substantial mental reserve. This mental reserve of knowledge and right attitude will make a real difference in virtually every sales encounter. Generally speaking, all things being equal, the prospect will buy from the salesperson they like. However, as John M. Wilson points out in his book

Open the Mind and Close the Sale, things are not equal when one salesperson has more knowledge and enthusiasm about the product they sell than a competing salesperson has about the product they sell.

You build your mental reserve by reading good books, by listening to motivational and sales training recordings, and by attending professional training sessions and your own company meetings. This really boils down to daily feeding your mind with good, clean, pure, positive input.

I also urge you to join and actively support your SMEI Club (Sales and Marketing Executives International) for sales managers and marketing managers.[1]

Kevin's Xponential Insight #6: Create a Positive Mental Diet

"You are what you are and where you are because of what has gone into your mind. You can change what you are and where you are by changing what goes into your mind." That's how Zig Ziglar put it—and he was right on target. What you choose to put into your mind comes out in your daily life and determines how you go about selling anything, including yourself. That's why you need to carefully choose what you put into your mind. In the words of Henry Ford, whether you think you can or you think you can't, you're right.

If you want to be successful, you must have the proper mental diet; what goes in determines what comes out. I live my life according to this secret and I surround myself with new information every day. I keep learning and improving my life and I minimize negative inputs that might hold me back from being my best. I choose to surround myself with people who encourage me and move me closer to my goals.

I love reading, and I think having a great mental diet is vital to enrich your mind. Zig Ziglar read about three hours a day. I usually read between two and three hours a day. I read five newspapers every day—business papers like the *Wall Street Journal* and the local business paper in the market that I'm in because I want to see what's going on there. I read the *New York Times*. I also read about the world of celebrities. Sometimes it's *People* and *US magazine*. It's fun to peek in on the lives of celebrities. But newspapers, magazines, trade journals, publications, houseware magazines, and electronic news magazines all help keep me informed and go into my mental diet.

I like to tune in to the news to keep up with what's happening in the world, but I also like to listen to podcasts. There are some amazing business people, entrepreneurs, and thought leaders out there who create great content for free. I listen to these on a daily basis. I call it putting your mind on a curiosity overload. It helps me keep up to speed on as many industries as I can on a day-to-day basis.

You've got two ways to wake up in the morning: you can think life's tough and you're negative and you are going down the wrong path, or you can expose yourself to positive people, positive things, positive places, and positive opportunities. It's just a mindset shift, and it starts with creating a positive mental diet.

With Mental and Physical Reserves You Can Score

You've got to be able to score in the last few seconds of the first half and the last few seconds of the ball game. The National Football League did a study on scoring and discovered that in the last two minutes of the first half and the final two minutes of the game, more points are scored than in any other *twenty* minutes of the football game!

Why? I believe there are three reasons. Number one, the teams realize that in most cases they need to score to get back in the game, to win, or to secure a shaky lead. Number two, they practice the "two-minute drill" more than any other phase of the game, so they are loaded with mental, physical, and emotional reserve. Number three, their objectives are clearly defined. They know what they've got to do, and because they have thoroughly prepared, their confidence is high that they can reach the objective, which is to score. This results in a fantastic finish of the half or of the game.

The same principles and procedures apply to you in your sales career. Build your reserves, get your thinking right, get your spiritual values in order, get your body in good physical condition, and you will have taken the key steps toward building an exciting and successful sales career.

Building Customer Reserve

There is yet another reserve which truly outstanding salespeople will build, and that is *customer* reserve in the form of testimonials from customers. I remember the first real testimonial I saw not long after I entered the world of selling. I lived in Columbia, South Carolina, and a big divisional meeting was scheduled in Charlotte, North Carolina, for all the salespeople in the Carolinas. One of the speakers that day was an old pro named Ralph Beaver

of Greensboro, North Carolina. Ralph was an extraordinary showman who specialized in the spectacular.

The "Testimonial" Close

At the conclusion of his talk that day, Ralph pulled out a roll of adding-machine paper four inches wide. He held it up so we could see that something had been typed on the paper. At this point Ralph dramatically said, "Now, ladies and gentlemen, even after a spectacular demonstration [he wasn't overly modest] and a strong series of closes, I still *occasionally* have prospects who say no.

"When that happens, I pull out this roll and say, 'Mr. and Mrs. Prospect, since there seems to be a little hesitancy on your part to go ahead and reserve a set of our cookware, let me ask you a question." With that he held the end of the adding-machine roll as high as he could reach and let one end go. As the roll of paper unwound the entire length of the room, Ralph Beaver continued. "The names on that roll of paper are your friends and neighbors who own the set of cookware you are looking at right now. He had neatly typed the name and address of every customer he had sold during his twenty years in the business. "Why don't you see if you know any of them?'" As the prospects got down on their knees to look, they always recognized a number of names.

Ralph: "Mr. and Mrs. Prospect, do you think all of those people made a mistake by investing in a set of cookware which saves time, money, and food value?" Prospect: "Probably not." Ralph: "As you can see, there are three lines at the bottom of the list. Will it be all right if I go ahead and put your name and address on those lines to indicate you took action to get something you've repeatedly said you really wanted?" Prospect: "Yes, go ahead."

The most effective testimonials, with the most dramatic results, are those obtained by Bernie Lofchick from Winnipeg, Canada. Bernie is a Maytag distributor and has achieved the highest level of market penetration of any Maytag distributor in their worldwide network, including over fifty countries. Interestingly enough, Bernie's retail outlet, which is not only a successful profit center but a learning and training center for the other

outlets as well, is located next door to a large discount store featuring washing machines, many of which are priced at less than half as much as the Maytag. Bernie considers the competitive store an asset to his business.

He and Maytag sell quality, durability, performance, and service. At one point he sold a new Maytag to a customer who reluctantly traded in her old wringer model, which was still doing a superb job after over forty years of service. She traded it in only because her arthritis had gotten so painful she could no longer operate it.

One of the most effective closes Bernie and his staff use involves telephone calls to satisfied customers who have been using their Maytags five, ten, fifteen, even twenty or twenty-five years. When these customers give their testimonials about service, performance, and durability, somehow the price objection completely disappears and a new Maytag customer joins the ranks.

These two approaches fit special situations, but satisfied customers can be, should be, and in many cases *want* to be helpful to you in selling additional prospects. Let's look at what sales pro Mike Frank has to say about the importance of customer testimonials, how to get them, and how to use them.

Why Use Testimonials?

Whether you and I personally like advertising which uses man- or woman-on-the-street "testimonials," recommendations, or endorsements, it is apparent the major corporations feel they are effective or they wouldn't spend millions of dollars per year on "testimonial" advertising. Think of just a few which come to your mind, past or present: American Express, beer companies, paper products, dental products, securities companies, Dale Carnegie courses, Charmin, 7-Up, Coca-Cola, Pepsi, etc.

Most salespeople who have been selling successfully for any length of time often receive testimonial letters on an unsolicited basis. These endorsements will usually compliment the salesperson on their effectiveness, follow-up, or attitude. They express appreciation for the salesperson's extra effort, how happy they are with the product, or how pleased they were with the company's handling of a service problem. Any letters you may have already received serve as a base for your "collection."

(Many salespeople who have received such letters appreciate them but don't realize what a valuable sales tool they can be. As a result, they do a lot of verbal selling when these letters have more credibility than anything the salesperson can say.) Remember: *People believe more of what they see than what they hear.* This is especially true in this case, because the prospect *always* considers the salesperson at least partly biased and often feels that a satisfied customer is just being honest.

Getting Those Testimonials

Testimonials are easy to get. Example: Let's suppose you went to a fine, newly opened restaurant last night in your hometown. You loved the food, atmosphere, and service, and they topped it off by bringing you the check at the proper time. As you left, you indicated your pleasure to the manager, owner, or maître d'. He thanked you and asked you some of the things we discussed in the previous paragraphs. Would you write him a letter based on his request? Ninety percent of you would say you would and 50 percent of you actually would write. You would be happy to help and even flattered that your opinion and *approval* were respected so highly. The request for the testimonial was a testament to your sincerity.

If you have been selling for a few years, think about those customers you have who have verbally told you how appreciative they are of your product, service, or idea . . . or of you as their salesperson . . . or of your company for any reason. Question: Doesn't it make sense to capitalize on these satisfied customers to find more satisfied customers? Do this. Make a list of all of those who fall into this category, or those whom you think might feel this way but haven't verbalized it to you. Now either call them or go see them. (Your list might have five or fifty names on it. Make contact with all of them.) Your presentation to them is similar to the following:

"Hi, _____. How is everything going with your _____?" (If they have a problem, assure them you will get the problem remedied and do so. If all is well, which it will be about 90 percent of the time, then proceed.) "I'm calling [or I'm here] to ask you an important question and a favor which could help me immensely in my selling career, without my asking you to buy a thing. Is that fair enough?" Smile and pause. The response is usually positive or encouraging.

“Remember when you told me a few weeks ago how pleased you were with our company [service or me]?” Wait for a response. “Well, believe it or not, we still have a lot of nonbelievers out there. It would mean a lot to me if you would share those feelings in a letter on one of your letterheads, at your convenience, and send it to me. Would you do that for me?” About 90 percent will say yes. About half of them will do it. Don’t ask them again. The 50 percent is sufficient to build your letter file. If the customer is one who has not verbalized their feelings to you, then of course don’t mention that they have told you of their pleasure in the past. Merely ask them their feelings about the company, service, you, etc., and if the response is positive, then ask them to do you the favor by writing you a letter regarding whatever praise they have.

If the letter is in praise of the product and/or company, that’s fine; it doesn’t have to be to you or about you. You can use letters from fellow salespeople, and if you work with others and all of you do this as a team effort, many of the letters can be mutually used.

The next step is to get them copied on a top-quality copying machine. Place them in nice plastic pages and then enter the pages into your presentation manual. If you don’t use a presentation manual—and we suggest that 95 percent of all top salespeople do have some type of manual with company information, prices, testimonial letters, guarantees, etc.—then we suggest you get a small three-ring binder for the letters.

Learn the letters. Testimonial letters don’t do you any good if you are not completely familiar with them. Use a yellow highlighting pen to emphasize the key points of the letter, which is the message you want delivered anyway. *Take this manual with you on all presentations.*

Use Testimonials This Way

To use customer testimonials effectively, you must be able to turn to the right one without delay, because in most cases you will use only one or two in any presentation. Sometimes they can be used to get in to see the prospect. As a general rule they are used in the conviction step or to answer an objection.

Example: The prospect might say to you, “I’m really concerned about service.” Your response is, “Mr. Prospect, I can appreciate your concern.

Jones Johns at XYZ Company initially felt the same way, but after he had a service need, here is what he said." Now you show him the letter that answers the question or objection. After he has read it, you continue with your presentation. Example: The prospect might say, "I'm concerned we won't get the tax break you mention." Now show him a letter that answers his objection.

You may not have a letter which answers all questions or objections, but if you keep working on building your collection of letters, eventually you will get one to answer almost any question or objection which might arise. Caution: While it is rare that you can have too many letters, I have seen it happen. Replace old letters with better ones and with ones from more credible prospects as time goes on. If you have as many as fifty letters, that isn't too many if you know them and can readily turn to the right one(s). Have them filed in some semblance of order—by industry or location, or alphabetically, or by type of question/objection, etc. (Don't put them in file folders unless they are just extra copies which you feel compelled to leave with the prospect on rare occasions.)

I know some of the top auto salespeople leave their letter manual with the prospect to read while the salesman has to go into the manager's office for approval. Many of the top real estate salespeople use such letters diligently. Industrial salespeople use them, but in most cases not to the degree they could and should. Insurance salespeople could be using them much more effectively. Professional speakers use them as their number one referral source and tool.

I believe a testimonial can be used effectively in almost every presentation or demonstration—to answer a question or objection, to get in to see the prospect, or as credibility when things are going well or not so well in the interview. Big-ticket retail salespeople should use them *far* more than they do. Testimonial letters from salespeople who may not be with the company anymore may be used in recruitment interviews. If the letter indicates that while the salesperson isn't with the company now, their years with your company were valuable and rewarding, such a good testimonial can sell a prospective recruit.

The uses are unlimited, but the realities of using them are like anything else. Additional effort is required to get them, learn them, highlight them, organize them, and use them effectively as an additional sales tool. Please be assured that the results and rewards are worth the effort—and then some.

1. Follow this link for more information about SMEI, https://www.smei.org/.

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Ya Gotta Have Love

You need to be tough. If you are going to make it big in the world of selling, you've got to be tough, and easily the toughest, most irresistible force on earth is love. You need to love life, the profession of selling, the prospects you deal with, your fellow man, your God, your country, and your family.

A Love Story

I close this segment of *Secrets of Closing the Sale* with a love story which I believe will be meaningful to you in your personal, family, and sales lives.

This love story is about the game of golf. If you're going to make it big in the world of selling, you've got to have real love and concern for your prospects. This love story demonstrates what I mean.

Playing golf is something I love to do. Several years ago, because of my travels, I didn't get to play very often, so when I did I'd get out there and get after it! I teed that ball up and flat let the string all the way out! I busted that ball, and on those occasions when I could find it, I hit it again.

As much as I love to play golf, I love my family infinitely more. And I discovered a long time ago that regardless of the course I play, it still takes about five hours. Since I was away from my family much of the time, I wasn't about to come in from a trip, grab my clubs, kiss my wife and son good-bye, and go play golf.

So I came up with a very creative solution to my "problem." I bought my son, Tom, and the Redhead a set of clubs. Now golf could become a family affair! Well, my wife and son tagged along with me for a few games, but

one day my wife said to me, “I know you love to play golf, honey. But I just don’t enjoy it. It’s not my game.” And she quit. So much for golf buddy number one.

Then, toward summer’s end, Tom said, “I hate to tell you this, Dad. I really like to be with you whenever it’s possible, but I just don’t enjoy playing golf.” So much for golf buddy number two. For the next two or three years, I didn’t play much golf.

My Son the Salesman

Then one evening we were out for a ride and drove past a driving range. Tom pleasantly surprised me and said, “Dad, let’s hit some golf balls.” My sticks were in the trunk of the car and he knew it would be an “easy sale” to get me to stop and hit a few golf balls—and he was right.

After we had hit a few, he said to me, “Dad, can I borrow one of your woods?” I handed him the club I was using. He choked up on it and hit that golf ball farther than I had ever seen him hit one before. Then he grinned at me and said, “Dad, when do we head for the golf course?”

The “Bird” Hunter

A few days later, Tom and I were playing on one of the par-four holes at the country club where we had been members for several years. He took one of my woods and teed off. This time he must have hit it perfectly, because that ball took off straight down the fairway just like the pros hit them. When it hit the ground it rolled a long way and stopped in perfect position, right in the middle of the fairway. From there he used a five-iron for his second shot and hit the ball onto the green. Just like on TV! The ball landed softly some forty feet from the hole. Now he was in position to get his “bird.”

For the nongolfer, this simply means he would be one under par if he sank his putt. (One under par on any hole is called a *birdie*.) Now I helped him line up the putt and showed him how to stroke the ball. When he hit that ball it headed straight for the hole. I knew it was good the minute he hit it. And when his ball hit the bottom of the cup, my boy grinned and leaped

into the air. You talk about excitement! I grabbed my son and hugged him as we did a victory dance for a minute or two.

A "Tainted" Win Is Actually a Loss

Then it dawned on me. I had a problem. My putt was coming up also and I too was hunting *my* bird. And my ball was on the green much closer to the cup. I knew that if I missed the putt Tom would think I had missed it on purpose to let him win the hole. But that would have given him a tainted victory, and as far as I'm concerned, that's quite a loss.

With this in mind, I decided to do my very best. Then if I missed it, I could face my son and say, "That's great, son, you beat ol' Dad fair and square." Then the win would not be tainted.

My best effort always includes a measure of providential help—which, I hasten to add, is theologically sound, even on the golf course. I lined up the ball and stroked it into the cup as well as I've ever stroked a putt in my life.

Before I picked up my ball, I turned to look at Tom and said, "Now tell me the truth, son, were you pullin' for your dad?"

The "Love" Close

I think you know what it would have meant to him if I'd missed. He was only eleven years old and had never beaten his dad on a hole of golf. It would have meant a great deal, and yet quietly, but without hesitation, and very firmly, my son looked at me and said, "Dad, I *always* pull for you."

That, my friends, is love. That's pure love. That's what we need more of in Dallas, Texas; Portland, Oregon; Chicago, Illinois; and St. Petersburg, Florida. That's what we need more of in every home and every county in every state in this great land of ours. It's the answer to your personal, family, and business problems, and for that matter, the world's problems.

It's certainly what we need in the wonderful world of selling. When you are on a sales interview, whether you are selling a product or a business opportunity, you must believe deeply, firmly, and sincerely that what you offer is in the best interests of the person you are trying to persuade to take

action. If you believe this way, you can sincerely pull for your prospect to buy for *their* benefit.

At that precise instant you become infinitely more effective, infinitely more professional, infinitely more productive, and infinitely *more.* It's true, as a wise man said: "People don't really care how much you *know*—until they know how much you *care* about them."

I guess if I were to sum it up, I would say despite all the information we've been giving you which I'm confident is valid, *in the final analysis you tell people from your head, but you persuade—you sell—from your heart.*

In this segment of *Secrets of Closing the Sale*, we discovered that:

H in the heart of your sales career is *honesty*.
E is *ego* and *empathy*.
A is your *attitude* toward *you*, your *prospects*, and your *profession*.
R is for physical, mental, and spiritual *reserve*.
T is for *tough*, and the toughest thing is love.

Now put those beginning letters together and they form an acrostic: HEART, because you see, the heart of your sales career is your very own, and *if your heart is right, your sales career will be right*.

PART 3

The Sales Professional

Objectives

To learn how to respond, which is positive, and not react, which is negative.
To spell out the differences between the professional salesperson and the nonprofessional salesperson, the high performer and the moderate performer.
To meet some real sales professionals from every walk of life and learn firsthand some of their characteristics, methods, and procedures.
To clearly establish the fact that dentists, builders, waiters, interior designers, schoolteachers, service station operators, children, etc. are *all* salespeople.

Closes and/or Procedures

The “Stood Up” Close
The “Impossible Child” Close
The “Complimentary” Close
The “Abraham Lincoln” Close
The “Previous Purchase” Close
The “Feel Good” Close
The “Tie Down” Close
The “Rainy Weather” Close
The “Spare” Close
The “Puppy Dog” Close

The “Soft Service Sell” Close
The “Accessory” Close

17

Learning and Using Professional Techniques

Do you respond or react? I hope you answered this question by saying you *respond*, because "respond" is positive and "react" is negative. Example: You get sick and go to the doctor. The doctor gives you a prescription and tells you to come in the next day so he can check on you. When you walk in the next day, the doctor takes one look, shakes his head, and says, "We're going to have to change your prescription because your body is *reacting* to the drugs." Nobody is happy with the *negative* results.

On the other hand, you go back the next day and the doctor takes one look and says, "Looks like we've got the right prescription. Your body is *responding* to the treatment." Everybody is happy with those *positive* results.

Kevin's Xponential Insight #7: Respond or React?

Choosing to respond rather than react isn't just good for morale and determination—it's saved me more than a few small fortunes over the years. Almost thirty years ago, we had a wildly successful infomercial product—a hand-hammered Chinese wok—called "The Great Wok of China." And boy did it take off!

The very first order sold ten thousand Chinese woks at forty dollars each. When the supplier asked how we wanted the woks shipped, I chose the cheapest option. But you know the rule, you get what you pay for. When the shipment arrived, someone called me with terrible news—all the woks were rusted. Apparently, the cheapest shipping option was on top of the boat, not inside the boat. The mist and the spray from the ocean voyage rusted all of them.

Now, we already had sold $400,000 worth of product and charged people's credit cards. I could have reacted. I could have blown up and shut down the business. And

believe me, I was tempted to do that. But, instead of reacting to the problem, I paused to think and respond. How do we solve this problem of rust on woks?

The answer required a little out-of-the-box thinking. I hired a bunch of college kids in LA to get some Brillo pads and start scrubbing! By the time they finished, every wok looked even better than when it left the factory—pristinely-scrubbed clean.

I paid about a dollar a wok in labor. And I had to buy all new boxes because the old ones molded from the ocean mist. But for somewhere in the neighborhood of fifty thousand dollars, we resolved that problem. The difference between reacting and responding that time was worth a cool $350,000.

Expect challenges. But don't focus on the negatives. Instead, receive every problem as an opportunity to make your situation even better. It just might save your sale, your company, and your wallet.

Here's What the Judge Does

In the world of selling—or for that matter, just in the world—everything we encounter is not going to be positive. For example, it would be safe to say that 99 percent of all the salespeople who ever sold—with the possible exception of those who strictly sell behind counters in a retail outlet—have been "stood up" as far as appointments are concerned. This is particularly true in direct sales, life insurance, real estate, and automobile sales. It would be almost as safe to say that most of those who are stood up *react* with anger, frustration, disappointment, or a combination of all three.

My late brother, Judge Ziglar, who broke the national sales record for the Saladmaster Corporation in 1964 by selling over $104,000 (today that would be approaching $1 million) worth of cookware, had a most unique *response* to broken appointments. He conducted cookware demonstrations, which meant he cooked large meals for several couples whom the hostesses had invited to attend. After demonstrating, he made appointments to see the couples in the privacy of their own homes the next day.

On occasion, when he arrived at the appointed time, no one would be at home. Instead of *reacting* with dismay, despair, frustration, or anger, Judge *responded* by saying, "Oh, boy! That's a sure sale!"

The “Stood Up” Close

The next day, at precisely the appointed hour for the day before, he would again appear at the door. When the husband or wife came to the door, Judge would immediately start with an apology. “I’m so sorry I missed you yesterday. I did everything in my power to see you, but it just wasn’t possible.” (He was being 100 percent honest. He had done everything in his power to see them. He had been there at the appointed time.)

Judge said that you would be astonished at the number of grown people who would let him take the blame for their discourtesy. At that point, as he expressed it, he knew the sale was his. Here’s why. If they did not have the courage to face him and say no at the appointed time, then they were not psychologically equipped to deal with a highly motivated, enthusiastic, well-trained professional salesman like him. By *responding* with that attitude, it’s not difficult to understand why he broke the record.

I need to explain that the prime reason Judge was so motivated was he believed with all his heart that the family he was calling on desperately needed—even *had* to have—his set of cookware. He *knew* it would save them money, work, and precious food value for their children. He truly had a missionary zeal in selling his product. He also understood human nature and the real reason they stood him up. I elaborated on this in the very first segment, but basically the couple *wanted* the cookware but didn’t think they could *afford* it and *feared* they were too weak to say no to their desires. Solution: Stand up the salesman. Reminder: That’s the reason you, my selling friend, need to develop the empathy I covered in chapter 9.

The “Impossible Child” Close

That’s not all. Most direct salespeople *react* with frustration and dismay when a small child disrupts the demonstration by climbing into the briefcase or sample case and scattering papers and samples from side to side. Frequently the parents will, in a weak, somewhat pathetic tone of voice, say, “Now, son, you shouldn’t bother the salesman’s papers.”

On occasion the husband will turn to his wife and say, “Honey, that child is impossible! Can’t you do something with him?” To this the wife

frequently gets up, takes the youngster out, and tells him to stay in his room. Three minutes later the youngster is back in the briefcase or samples, wreaking havoc. Now in despair the father and mother pull their hair, wring their hands, scream at the child, and beg him to behave himself.

It's at this point Judge Ziglar said he knew he had made the sale. Again, if they could not say no to a three-year-old, how could they say no to a highly motivated, well-trained professional salesman like him? Judge pointed out it was obvious to him the parents did not love their child enough to discipline him. Judge loved children, *all* children, but especially the neglected ones. As he expressed it, "Since it is obvious this 'impossible' child will never have the advantage of loving discipline, I feel even more strongly the child must have the best possible chance at good, nutritious food for a healthy body."

We're dealing with an attitude in selling, but it also involves some knowledge of human nature and just good, common sense. If you think about it, that's what the highly motivated, well-trained professional salesperson uses most often. *And* they certainly work on their thought processes and attitude until they can look at their sales situations and *respond* instead of react.

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Characteristics of the Professional Salesperson

Since I constantly make reference to the fact that the salesperson is the most important part of the sales process, let's take a look at the sales professional. First of all, they clearly understand that logic makes people think, but it is emotion that makes them act. They know if they use all logic in a sales presentation, chances are excellent they will end up with the best-educated prospect in town who will buy from someone else. If they use all emotion in a sales presentation, chances are excellent they will make the sale but, unfortunately, chances are also good the prospect will cancel the order. However, they know that when they use emotion *and* logic in the presentation, chances are excellent they will end up with a sale today and a happy customer for the future.

The professional understands that logic is aimed at and appeals to the eye. Emotion is aimed at and appeals to the ear. This is why, when humanly possible, we not only tell people what our merchandise or goods will do but we demonstrate at the same time.

We've been conditioned to believe what we see instead of what we hear. The eyes have truly been called the "windows of the soul"—the mind's eye believes what it sees. The eyes are the only one of our sense organs which connect directly to the brain. For this reason, logically we accept more readily what we see than what we hear. However, we are moved into action by what we hear. Remember, our "feeling" brain is ten times as large as our "thinking" brain, so "tell 'em" *and* "show 'em" and your chances of selling them are greatly multiplied.

Extrovert or Introvert

There are probably a thousand different opinions regarding the professional salesperson. The man on the street thinks they are a happy-go-lucky, storytelling, backslapping, extroverted, hail-fellow-well-met type of an individual. The truth is the professional salesperson is far more likely to be introverted than they are extroverted. Not painfully so, but by nature they are quieter and more serious. Obviously, there are exceptions to every rule. But let's look at the extrovert versus the introvert.

The extrovert is a person who is more likely to make a good first impression. They are easy to like and establish rapport fairly well. In too many instances, however, they depend on the force of their personality to get the sale. On a one-call, one-shot item when they're passing through town, that's fine. However, if they're going to build a career, that's a different matter. If they're selling on a continuing basis to the same buyer, that, too, is a different matter.

The introvert is more likely to be *thorough* in their studies, *precise* in their presentation, and *knowledgeable* about the goods, products, or services their company has to offer. They are better organized. They know where they're going to be at a given time. They're far more likely to plan their schedule and then work that schedule. They are in most cases a better listener and a better student at uncovering the prospect's needs.

Of course, the *ideal* professional salesperson is an extrovert who is so serious about their profession they work to develop some of the introvert's characteristics so they can more effectively serve their customers. *Or* they are an introvert who is so committed to their profession they develop some of the extrovert's characteristics so they can more effectively serve their customers.

High Performers vs. Moderate Performers

The study by DeMarco and Maginn of The Forum Corporation revealed that highly successful salespeople practice fundamental sales skills, management skills, *and* good human relations to get along with staff members, customers, and other salespeople. *They do not abdicate responsibility for installation, implementation, and service to technical*

support people. They continue to maintain a "service" relationship which younger salespeople, interested in building a career, need to learn.

High performers—regardless of the industry—involve others by soliciting opinions, sharing information, and establishing trust relationships *inside* the organization. Indications are extremely strong these high-performing salespeople could move from the sales force into a bank or manufacturing concern and perform at the same level. The revelation was that *ability to sell is not what separates the moderate performer from the high performer.* The other factors—trust, relationships, etc.—were the key. The high-performing sales professionals are *total*, well-balanced people with integrity who are knowledgeable and aggressively caring in their creative approach to solving problems.

A Team Player with Integrity. The high performer is an influence manager of considerable skill and serves as the liaison or connecting link between the customer in the field and the support people in the company. They work with their support people in a way that enhances their productivity and self-esteem while concentrating on issues important to building and maintaining a productive, trusting relationship with the customer.

The high performer helps with related products and services and simplifies the decision-making process for the customer by their willingness to identify other sources of help if the needs of the client extend beyond their expertise and the capability of their own company. Customers value integrity very highly and expect to receive hints as well as knowledgeable responses to their questions.

High-performing salespeople represent the interests of their company and of their clients with dignity, integrity, and skill. They bring added value to the sales task with greater enthusiasm, more sensitive interpersonal skills, and a sense of professionalism. They communicate clearly and sensitively to customers and support staff, which builds customer confidence that they know what they're doing. They also understand that the product or service itself does not build value but that *salespeople build value with every visit to a customer.*

Building internal relationships clearly is a key to the success of high performers. Moreover, the high performer is a team player whose internal-relationship behavior is consistent with the behavior that makes them successful with customers. They also see their sales managers as a resource

to be called upon at the appropriate moment and indicate that their manager is an effective leader who encourages initiative and provides support.

Kevin's Xponential Insight #8: You Are the Most Important Sale You'll Ever Make

Remember: You are the most important sale you'll ever make. Your character and reputation are what will determine your long-term selling success.

What do you do when you do make mistakes? First, own up to your mistake. The buck stops with you. If something goes wrong, customers want to know that you're gonna take care of the problem. You own up to it. That's the cost of doing business.

Own up to it, then compensate for it. In fact, overcompensate for the mistake. If somebody complains, "Hey, you charged me twice." Answer with, "We're going to issue a credit for that second charge, and for your inconvenience, I'm sending you a gift certificate that you can use on any product that we have. We really do apologize."

Then immediately get to the root of the problem. If the factory's making defective products, go back and find out why it is defective. Tighten up your quality assurance process. Set up systems to make sure it doesn't happen again.

At the end of the day, there's one goal—take care of your customers. If you were to call back each person who got double charged, the greatest thing that could happen would be for all of them to say, "You know what? Yeah, we had a problem, but they solved it and left me with a warm and fuzzy feeling. I would recommend this company anytime."

The Professional

The professional is so other-people conscious they never let their ego hinder their efforts. They understand their function as a professional is not to attempt to help the prospect decide on buying or not buying, but rather to give information so the prospect will have the facts to make an intelligent decision. They give some inspirational or motivational input so the prospect will be inspired to make the right decision.

The professional is thick-skinned to the degree that they are not offended easily by what the prospect has to say. This does not mean they accept abusive language or insulting manners. It does mean they know that many times the prospect has been abused by other salespeople, and they are able

to understand that the prospect is not rejecting them but is simply refusing the offer they're making.

The Professional Understands

The professional thinks in terms of service, but *they also think in terms of their ability to make the sale on a specific call.* They expect to make the sale. They are versatile in their sales knowledge and their approach. They work from a plan and not a can, but as a professional they know that while there are many ways to say things, there is *one* best way. As a result, they include many verbatim phrases, explanations, and expressions in *every* sales presentation. They feel strongly that it is their responsibility to sell so clearly that the prospect understands it is in their best interests to buy.

They know when the prospect acts in an abusive manner it is often a defensive measure prompted by a sense of fear because of their own feeling of inferiority or ego inadequacy. They understand one universal rule in the world of selling and apply it with diligence and enthusiasm. That rule is their absolute conviction that *they need to find out what the prospect wants and then help them get it.*

The dictionary defines the *professional* as "one who has an assured competence in a particular field or occupation." It's *quality* of performance. The professional has a good sense of humor. They take their profession and their prospects' needs seriously—but not themselves.

The Professional Is a Student

They clearly understand that school is never out for them. They study their prospects, study their company literature, and study the art of persuasion. They read good books, listen to inspirational messages, attend training sessions, and most of all, on every sales interview they study human nature. They know if they're going to change their status in life, they must change their performance. To change that performance they need to change their thinking. To change their thinking they must change the input into their mind, so they selectively choose the "good stuff" for they understand very clearly that their mind is not a garbage dump—it's a temple.

The professional "goes to school" by watching good salespeople in action, whether at the direct, wholesale, or retail level. They constantly asks themselves questions like, "How can I take this procedure and translate it into my own sales situation so I can more effectively sell and service my customers?" They know their prospects will make their decision based on what they understand *and* believe, so they undersell, keep it simple, and make it believable.

The Professional "Lives" Selling. Yes, they're sales conscious. They wake up in the morning thinking sales. They go to work thinking sales. They come home thinking sales. The only difference is that when they get home they understand that even though their sales situation is different, they will use the same basic procedures and work from the same character base. They remember that selling is a *transference* of feeling, and hypocrisy on these "sales calls" will produce the same negative results they produce with their other "prospects."

From their heart they must sell their children on being the best possible children. From their heart they sell their spouse on the idea that they're a good mate and then demonstrate the point they wish to make. In short, they are other-people conscious from morning to evening. The beautiful thing is that it's so much fun for them that it gets to be—and is—second nature.

They understand that people buy for *their* reasons and not the salesperson's. For this reason they study a great deal about motivation and human behavior, fully understanding that in order to influence behavior you need to understand something about it. They understand that a good idea, procedure, or technique does not care who owns or uses it.

The professional is an optimist. They look on the bright side of every aspect of life. They know the average prospect experiences enough gloom and doom in their life and does not appreciate a salesman spreading additional gloom. The professional understands that they—to a very large degree—are in control of the buying climate. With that in mind they do not discuss irrelevant subject matter and do not bring in the latest national or local tragedy. They create an atmosphere of excitement and optimism so their chances of making the sale are greatly enhanced. They have great singleness of purpose and concentration on the immediate objective, whether it is to make the sale, placate a disgruntled customer, or make a follow-through PR call. This singleness of purpose enables the professional to zero in on the customer's dominant buying motive and concentrate their

energies and attention on helping the prospect get what they want. They're highly motivated and transmit their excitement to their prospects, who are motivated to respond by taking action.

The Professional Is Adaptable

They are a thinker, but they clearly understand it is better to emulate genius than to create mediocrity, so they evaluate materials and procedures on the basis of results. If the techniques and methods they are using are getting desirable results, they will stay with them. But they abandon any procedure or technique that proves to be ineffective. They do not permit themselves to get comfortable in using a sales process and continuing to use it long after it has lost its effectiveness. They're aware of change in procedure, but they're even more aware of the fact that *principles* do not change.

The Professional Is Career Oriented

Because they are career oriented, every action is taken with the idea in mind of building a career rather than just making that individual sale. The professional fully understands the old cliché that *words alone will often fail, so they demonstrate to make the sale.* They understand that when the prospect *sees* the product or service demonstrated, the believability factor increases. They also clearly understand that if you hear something, you will forget it; if you see it, you will remember it; but if you hear it, see it, and do it, you will understand and be far more inclined to take action. With this in mind, they get the customer involved in the presentation. They let that customer feel the cloth as they slip on the coat. They permit them to do the driving in the demonstration. They let that customer sit down at the keyboard and work the computer. They use visuals and testimonials in their presentation.

They encourage the customer to take their turn with the vacuum cleaner. They permit their customers to apply the makeup personally so they will have confidence that yes, they can do exactly the same thing. In short, the professional salesperson gets the customer involved in the use of the products, goods, or services.

The professional possesses conviction, concern, confidence, and courage. Their conviction is strong that their product will solve the prospect's problem. Their concern is genuine that the prospect buy now for their own benefit. Their confidence is strong that they can persuade the prospect to take action, and their courage enables them to ask the prospect to take action now for their own best interests.

The professional has an incurable curiosity! They don't just wonder why the grass is greener on the other side, they climb over the fence to see how the grass is being fertilized and learn the brand they're using.

The Professional Looks and Acts Professional

The professional looks the part of a professional. They are appropriately dressed for the occasion. They know you can't play the role of success dressed in the costume of failure. They understand that you cannot harvest this year's crop on last year's fertilizer, so they constantly plant the right thoughts and procedures in their mind. In short, they appropriately dress both mind and body.

The professional is a person of principle. They understand that the man or woman who won't stand for something will fall for anything. They know if you add one small bit to the truth that you inevitably subtract from it. They buy the statement of Will Rogers, who said, "I would rather be the man who bought the Brooklyn Bridge than the one who sold it." The implication is clear that they will bend over backward to protect their integrity and to keep from taking advantage of anyone. They understand that, as Ann Landers says, that's an awkward position, but they know they won't fall on their face while leaning over backward.

The professional is a hard worker. They understand, as sales trainer Steve Brown from Atlanta, Georgia, puts it, that anything worth doing is worth doing poorly—until you learn how to do it well. *And* they stick and study until they learn to do it professionally. They clearly know we do not get work done through people, but we develop people through the work. In short, they know activity precedes accomplishment and learning generally precedes activity. They do their homework and practices at sales meetings and in front of their family. They are eager to get in front of the prospect for the final examination, where they put their learning on trial and reach their

objectives. As sales trainer Phil Lynch said, *they prepare for tomorrow by performing today*.

The Professional Is on the Grow

The professional builds a beautiful library containing much information about the sales profession, the sales process, and the people they sell. They would never dream of going to a doctor who quit studying when they finished medical school, or an attorney who quit studying when they finished law school. They would be dismayed if they realized the doctor or the attorney had no resource materials to refer to and learn from. With this in mind they build their own sales library and add to it on a regular basis.

They understand that the average salesperson spends several hundred dollars a year dressing the outside of his or her head—that's for shaves, haircuts, hairspray, cosmetics, cologne, and perfume—and will spend a minimum of three thousand dollars dressing their body, and several thousand on transportation. Now, after having spent thousands of dollars getting ready to go sell, *they clearly understand that as a professional they need to know what to say when they get there*. With that in mind they constantly fill their library and—more importantly—their head with the new procedures and techniques.

They are able to put their investment in books, recordings, and training seminars into perspective by understanding how much it costs them and/or their company to *make* a sales call—and how much more it costs to *miss* the sale because of inadequate, erroneous, or incomplete information. Laptop computers, cell phones, instant this and instant that provide an incredible sales opportunity advantage. Though the *dollar* cost for a sales call is high, the cost in human frustration and wrecked sales careers because of a lack of sales information, technique, and inspiration is infinitely higher. The cost of acquiring the necessary training information is minute in comparison to the cost of *not* acquiring that training. Like the man said, "If you think education is expensive, just look at the cost of ignorance." Or, to make it personal, how many times have *you* missed a sale and later picked up some information or technique which you *know* would have made the difference (it hurt, didn't it)?

P.S. Congratulations for investing in *Secrets* and getting this involved in the learning process. Keep it up. *You are growing!*

The Professional Pushes Themselves

The professional sets internal standards for performance. They have goals which they work on daily. Generally speaking, according to an article in *Psychology Today*, they set their own quotas and goals higher than the company would set them. They are far more inclined to use their spare time in sales-related tasks. For example, when things are slow they write follow-up or thank-you notes to customers instead of killing time reading magazines, drinking coffee, or engaging in bull sessions.

As times change, the professional changes procedures and techniques but never changes the concepts and philosophy of delivering as much as possible, as enthusiastically as possible, at the lowest fair price.

The professional knows that all the knowledge contained in the books in the Library of Congress won't work without the magic of common sense and judgment. In the final analysis they understand that *their career will depend on what they do with what they know*, not just on what they know.

Not a Professional

The professional understands that you don't become a salesperson by answering an ad in a newspaper and grabbing a briefcase with a prospectus in it any more than you become an engineer by buying a calculator or become a doctor by acquiring a stethoscope.

There's far more to being a salesperson than simply smiling, dressing neatly, telling some good stories, and learning a few good lines.

When I speak of the professional, I'm obviously not talking about the guy or gal who is a dropout from some other profession or the ones who simply drifted into selling because it was "easy." ("All you've got to do is talk"—they think—"and since I'm a good talker, I'll be a good salesperson." One of the myths exploded by The Forum Corporation study is that a salesperson has to be a glib fast-talker.) Nor am I talking about the

part-time clerk who went to work six weeks before Christmas to pick up some extra money.

The Professional Gets with It

The professional has *chosen* the profession of selling and stays in school throughout their entire career, consistently working to earn the title "salesperson." They work as hard on their attitude, self-image, relationships, and goals as they do on procedures and techniques. They clearly understand that they must get the *person* ready before they can get the *salesperson* ready.

The professional understands that they need to stay "green and growing," because *a green salesperson is always better than a blue one.* They know as long as they're green they're growing, but when they get ripe they will rot.

The professional salesperson is the story of the high jumper who broke the world's record. Somebody asked him how he did it and he responded, "I threw my heart over the bar and the rest of me followed."

When you really get your heart into the profession of selling and with the company you're representing, you will acquire the skills, procedures, and technique necessary for success. As Dr. Robert Schuller, author of *Move Ahead with Possibility Thinking*, says:

> "Spectacular achievement is always preceded by unspectacular preparation."

The professional's attitude is such that they're grateful for *some* of the difficulties. They don't want to be like this old boy down home who stated that he would occasionally like a blessing which was not in disguise. I mention this because when we encounter the tough prospect and the tough sale, we must remember that the tough prospects are our best teachers, and if all sales were easy and "anybody could do it," our commissions would be about one-tenth as much as they are.

The professional understands completely that competition is getting keener all the time, and so they must do the same thing. The professional *has* character; they are not one.

As sales pro Mike Frank says, “The professional acquires and maintains a ‘prospecting awareness.’ He seeks prospects from current and former clients as well as everyone he calls on, regardless of sales results. He cultivates them at the supermarket, the club, and restaurants, as well as other social contacts. He utilizes information gleaned from radio, TV, and newspapers as well as billboards and bus signs. He ‘sees’ a prospect behind every bush and tree and around every corner.”

The professional keeps records. They remember what has made them successful and they keep the same hustle, enthusiasm, and dedication to the job. Those factors which got them started, combined with expertise, experience, skill, and knowledge, are what make them the successful professional. They are a student and read good books and publications on selling and motivation.

Recency, Frequency, Potency, and Recommendation

In the world of professional selling, the professional remembers that if they’re going to build a career instead of just selling one customer one time and then having to look for another, they must take seriously the advice of Dr. Joseph Braysich, the “body language” expert from Sydney, Australia. He advocates the use of the “recency, frequency, potency, recommendation”[1] formula, which is self-explanatory.

Recency. This refers to how long it has been since you were in touch with your customers to let them know you are available to serve, tell them that you appreciate their business, and inform them about a new addition to your product line or a new use for the products they already have. According to Dr. Braysich, customers, even those who are good friends, need to be reminded of your existence and your eagerness to meet their needs or solve their problems.

Frequency. This will vary tremendously with the product and the practicality of the time investment as it relates to production, but in a competitive world, in some shape, form, or fashion, your customers need to be reminded of your existence and your interest. Otherwise, competition which has no feeling of “I’ve already got that customer” complacency enters the picture and you’re short one customer.

The man who is one of the best in the world at keeping his name in front of his customers is Joe Girard, who with Stanley H. Brown wrote the bestselling book *How to Sell Anything to Anybody.* His phenomenal success in the automobile business enabled him to write a book on selling based on his personal experiences. To the best of my knowledge, he holds all the records for selling cars. He sold:

1963—267
1964—307
1965—343
1966—614
1967—667
1968—708
1969—764
1970—843
1971—980
1972—1,208
1973—1,425 (record year)
1974—1,376
1975—1,360
1976—over 1,200
1977—over 1,200

For the details on this astonishing performance, you should pick up Joe's book and carefully read what he has to say. There are many remarkable things about his record. First is the fact that over this fifteen-year period of time, he averaged nearly nine hundred cars per year, and these were all individual sales—no fleet sales at any time. Second, these were sales and not "deals" or giveaways. His company made a profit, Joe made a profit, and the customers obviously "won," too, or they would not have returned time after time. Third, Joe was the number one automobile salesman in America every year from 1967 to 1977. The magnitude of that feat almost defies description. Fourth, despite the fact there were two recessions during his first eleven years, he sold more cars every year than he had sold the previous year. Fifth, the last six years he sold cars on a full-time basis

(before getting heavily involved as a speaker and writer) he averaged over thirteen hundred cars sold each year.

There are many reasons for such phenomenal sales success, but one of them is the fact that once a month Joe dropped a card in the mail to *every one* of his customers. Obvious ones like Christmas, Easter, birthday, and anniversary; and not-so-obvious ones like Happy Fourth of July, Labor Day, or Washington's or Lincoln's Birthday. With cards coming *all the time* his customers consider Joe a member of the family, or at least an old friend. That's the way a real professional does things.

Mike Frank adds his own touch to this process by handwriting a minimum of seven cards every day. Mike uses a note pad which includes his picture, because many of his contacts are of a ten-to-fifteen-minute duration, during which time he sells his prospect on inviting him back at a later date to conduct a meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to sell tickets for an upcoming sales and motivation congress. The note reminds the prospect of the date and the picture helps them to put Mike's name and face together. Mike does the same thing with people he did not sell to but who might buy later. He has done this *every day* since 1972. Tough to do—yes. Time consuming—yes. Rewarding—you betcha!

Potency. How strong was your impact? How solid is the relationship? Will your customer distinctly recall your last contact? Are you solidly entrenched because you sold and served well, or did you get in for that initial sale through connections? It's great to have connections to make sales, but it's highly dangerous and erroneous thinking to believe that once you sell to them they are *your* customers.

Recommendation. This one, especially on the initial sale, is critically important. As you will learn in the next chapter, Chuck Bellows sold me a Cadillac because the recommendation was so strong I went to see him prepared to believe him, to trust him, and yes, to buy from him. The professional builds that kind of reputation. Strong recommendations are the easiest—and by far the surest—method of building a sales career.

Finally

The professional is skilled at communicating and reading the prospect's communications back to them. According to some authorities, *what we say*

contains only 7 percent of the persuasive impact of the message. The way we say it contains 38 percent and our body language the remaining 55 percent. With this in mind, the professional learns body language and voice inflection. They learn and use the words that sell and avoid the words that unsell. (I deal with this phase of the professional in chapter 23.)

The professional is a builder and not a destroyer. They build their fellow salespeople. They build their country, their company, their community. They constantly suffer from a case of mild discontent which they instinctively transform to inspirational dissatisfaction, which is one of the most powerful forces we can harness in professional selling.

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1. Joseph Braysich, *Body Language: The Art of Seeing What Others Are Thinking* (Joseph Braysich & Associates, Australia, 1979).

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Here Is a Professional

Let's look at a real professional in the world of selling. I believe this story will cover as many specific sales points, techniques, and procedures as you will ever see covered in a sales story. Not only will it be helpful to all salespeople, but the lessons in psychology and persuasion will also be useful to any layperson or professional who ever has to "sell" an idea. In short, it will help you—personally and professionally.

This story will "cover the waterfront" since it includes voice inflection, how to ask questions, the importance of sales skill *and* the salesperson, how to effectively negotiate the determining factor in the sale, how to move from the seller's side of the table to the buyer's side, how to lead prospects to new decisions, how to break the price down so it's not such a big factor, and how and why you should sell value. It covers the steps you take to make the prospect feel good about unsatisfactory previous purchases, the importance of the follow-through in building a sales career, how to use the Abraham Lincoln approach in convincing the prospect to take action, how to gently chastise the vacillating prospect, and much more.

People Remember Stories

As you have already noticed, *Secrets of Closing the Sale* contains many, many stories. I tell a lot of sales stories for two good reasons. First, you are far less likely to let your mind drift when you are reading a story (provided I tell it well). Second, you remember stories more easily than anything else, and as you recall the story you will also remember the points and techniques taught in the story. Since you can use only what you remember,

teaching techniques through true stories and analogies is the most effective method ever devised. As you probably know, this was the procedure used by the Carpenter from Galilee, who was the greatest Salesman and the greatest Teacher who ever lived.

As a teacher and trainer, I'm completely aware of the fact that if the student didn't learn, the teacher didn't teach. I want this book to inform you, to make you a better person and a better salesperson. I want it to make you more professional and more productive. The only way it will do all those things is if it *teaches* you effective techniques and *inspires* you to use them.

In November of 1975, I decided to buy a new car, and since the '76 Cadillac was especially beautiful, I visited two dealerships, went for a test drive, and began shopping for the best overall offer. Since I drive very little, I only buy a new car every five or six years, so I was in no special hurry to "buy today." In a telephone conversation with a business acquaintance, the talk turned to cars and I commented that I was probably going to buy a new Cadillac. He immediately told me that I ought to talk to Chuck Bellows at Rodger Meier Cadillac.

With that comment, I said, "Well, you obviously know him. Why don't you give him a call, tell him I'm a nice fellow, that I'm on my way over, and to treat me right?" To that he responded, "I'll be glad to do that and, Zig, I'll tell you in advance, you can absolutely depend on Chuck Bellows. If he tells you it's going to rain, man, you can set your tubs out! His reputation for being honest and for having integrity is absolutely great!"

We finished the conversation, he called Chuck, and I got into my automobile and headed over to Rodger Meier. As I was driving down the service road and circling the dealership, Chuck recognized my car because our mutual friend had described it to him. When I pulled into the only available parking slot, Chuck was standing there to open the door.

The "Complimentary" Close

Chuck is an old-fashioned guy and very definitely an introvert. As he opened the door he said, "You've got to be Zig Ziglar." Zig: "Yes, I am."

Chuck: “Well, Mr. Ziglar, let me start by telling you I think you’re driving one of the nicest cars I’ve ever seen. It’s absolutely beautiful!”

Point number one: Bragging about a recent or previous purchase is not a bad way to start an interview. A sure way to make me feel good about buying something else is to make me feel good about a previous purchase. This is exactly what Chuck was doing. There is an “if” attached. That is, *if* he’s telling me the truth. If that car’s a dog, if it’s a beat-up wreck and he says, “Man, that’s a beautiful car!” then I grab my pocketbook and run for my financial life because I know he’s trying to get his hands in my pocket.

Point: Make certain the observation or compliment is accurate and sincere.

Chuck was telling the truth. It was a beautiful car. It was an Oldsmobile Regency—two-tone brown—with all the good stuff on it which increases the value and enhances the enjoyment of a car. So when he said, “Man, you’ve got a beautiful car,” I responded by thanking him and telling him I had enjoyed the car very much and it had given me excellent service. He reiterated, “Well, it is a beautiful car. Do you mind telling me where you got it?”

Ask Those Questions

It’s very important for you to notice these questions, because they’re completely natural and appear to be casual, despite the fact that Chuck has probably asked these same questions many times over the years. His questions were not “canned,” but they were very carefully planned. I responded that my neighbor across the street is a General Motors executive and I got the car through him. Chuck: “Say, did you by any chance get one of the executive cars?” Zig: “Well, as a matter of fact, I did.” Chuck: “I’ll bet you got a good deal on it, didn’t you?” (I don’t know how you are, but the odds are great when somebody accuses you of having made a good deal four or five years earlier you’re going to modestly admit you did all right in the transaction. I hope you do it modestly; otherwise it’s tacky!)

As modestly as I could, I said, “Well, Chuck, to tell you the truth, when I bought this car it was a seventy-six-hundred-dollar automobile.” (Remember, this was in 1975.) “It only had twenty-one hundred miles on it and I got it for fifty-six hundred.” Chuck: “Say, you *did* get a good deal!”

True. I did get a good deal, but with those words I also did something else. I loaded the first barrel of his sales shotgun. He had asked me for information and I (a prospect) had given it to him.

Point: When you’re talking with a prospect, please remember that in most cases they’re delighted to give you pertinent information if you’ll just ask for it!

Chuck continued, “Mr. Ziglar, I’m delighted you’re here. Let me get the appraiser to see just how much we can give you for your fine car. I’ll tell you right now, if it’s as nice on the inside as it is on the outside, we’re going to be able to swap with you today and make you happy in the process, because we have a magnificent inventory.” He found the appraiser and they got into the car and drove off.

Think like a Buyer—and a Seller

They went wherever it is they go when they do whatever it is they do when they appraise a car. They were gone about ten or fifteen minutes. When they drove back into the parking lot, old Chuck was sitting on the passenger side, grinning like the proverbial cat which had just swallowed the canary. I mean, he was really excited!

As a salesperson, let me remind you that you need to be thinking as a buyer *and* as a seller. In this particular case, since I’m buying, I am thinking as a buyer.

When Chuck pulled into the lot with that big grin on his face, I’ve got to confess to you that an embarrassing thought went through my mind. (Now I want to stress that I didn’t let it stay long before I ran it on out of there!) The word *steal* entered my mind. I figured he was so sold on my four-year-old car that he was going to *pay me* to swap! Like I say, it’s embarrassing,

but again I remind you that I was a prospective customer, so I was *thinking* as a customer.

To keep things in perspective, I remind you again, again, and yet again that if you want to scale the heights as a professional salesperson, *you must always, in every sales situation, be thinking as a seller and as a buyer.*

As a prospective buyer I thought to myself, "He loves my car. I'm going to get an incredible offer on it, I just know I am!" The car stopped and Chuck stepped out. I'm not certain, but I believe old Chuck has had some training in dramatics. When he stepped out of the car, he closed the door, backed away, and just shook his head. Then, as if he couldn't believe it, he opened the door and closed it again. He obviously loved this magnificent machine which he was going to have an opportunity to obtain in a trade.

Bring Out Those Unspoken Objections

He looked at me and repeated what he had said earlier. "You know, Mr. Ziglar, this really is one of the most beautiful cars I think I've ever seen! As a matter of fact, it is in even better condition on the inside than it is on the outside. You're to be commended." Zig: "Thank you very much, Chuck." He continued, "As a matter of fact, I'm a little puzzled. Please don't misunderstand, because I'm delighted you're here, but I am a little curious as to why you want to swap such a beautiful automobile at this time."

You readers who are directly involved in the world of selling, especially if you haven't been at it too long, might think this question seems a bit negative. Zig brings in a four-year-old car to trade on a new one and Chuck is asking *why* he wants to swap it right now. Instead of it being negative, I believe it is a positive sign of a competent and confident professional.

Here's why. *If there are any objections, it is infinitely better to bring them out early so you can deal with them as part of the presentation rather than at the end of the interview.* If you, the salesperson, can smoke out any objection early, you can sell on the offense instead of on the defense.

Back to Chuck

When Chuck asked, “Why do you want to swap this car?” I looked at him, smiled, and replied, “Well, Chuck, to tell you the truth, we have a family reunion in Mississippi in about three weeks and I think it would really be nice if I drove a new Cadillac over there.” Chuck obviously thought that would be kind of nice, too, but he didn’t say anything. (He didn’t have to—I had just loaded the second barrel of his sales shotgun!) He simply got out his talking pad (I’ve stressed throughout this book that you need to keep your talking pad handy) and started figuring. He had a big grin on his face, so my confidence that I was going to get a really good offer went up even more.

From High to Low to High

Unfortunately, that feeling was short-lived, because after he’d been figuring a moment or so, that magnificent grin of his started to fade into neutral. As the grin dissolved I looked at him and thought to myself, *Oh, no! He’s hit a snag, maybe even found something wrong,* and my heart started to sink. He continued to figure and after a few more minutes that magnificent expression of a moment earlier which had shifted into neutral shifted all the way into plain ugly! As a matter of fact, I’ve never seen such a high concentration of ugly in one small spot in my life! My heart literally went all the way down to my heels. I was thinking (more accurately, talking) to myself, *Oh, no! He’s found something wrong and I just know I’m not going to be able to get that beautiful new Cadillac I’ve really set my heart on!*

In retrospect, I should have been more optimistic, especially since I do have a reputation for being a positive thinker. Actually, I was guilty of selling Chuck Bellows short and I shouldn’t have done that, because among other things, he is a fighter! I mean, he flat hung in there and kept figuring and kept figuring and kept figuring. Finally, that ugly on his face started shifting back into neutral and I caught myself pulling for him, *Come on, Chuck, hang in there, man, stay with it!* And bless his heart, that’s exactly what he did.

After a few more minutes of concentrated figuring, that neutral expression went back to his magnificent smile. At that point Chuck looked up from his talking pad and in an excited voice said, “Mr. Ziglar, I’ve got marvelous news for you! Because of the remarkably good condition of your

car, and because of our wonderful inventory, we're going to be able to swap with you today for just seventy-three eighty-five."

I Almost Had a Heart Attack!

Please don't misunderstand—I'm an educated man. I mean, I watch television and I read the newspapers and everybody knows that's where you get your education. I knew that the price of automobiles had been going up-up-up-UP! Not only that but my friends and all of my relatives had been saying to me, "Zig, you cannot believe what has happened to the price of automobiles! Man, they've gone absolutely crazy!" But my friends and relatives were talking about a different subject.

That's a Lot of Money!

They were talking about *their* cars and *their* money. Chuck Bellows was talking to me about *my* car and *my* money, and that's an entirely different ball game. When he said, "Seventy-three eighty-five," and that's what he said, just as smoothly and easily as anything you've ever heard (he didn't say, "Seven thousand three hundred eighty-five dollars"), I *screamed* like a stuck pig!

"Whooo-whooo! Chuck! Man alive," I said, "that's a lot of money!" Chuck looked me in the eye and quietly asked a very simple question—with just the right voice inflection, I might add. "Mr. Ziglar, is it too much?"

Important point: He didn't argue, get defensive, or try to justify the price. He had quietly and with an almost casual confidence put the ball back in my court.

What Is He Asking Me? As a player in this game I've got to ask myself some questions and make some decisions. First, what is he asking me? Is he asking me if the price is beyond my reach, is it out of my financial range? Does it represent a challenge? Is he really telling me that if I can't handle the $7,385 difference I should act like a man and confess that I just can't

handle that much money? Dear reader, if you know anything at all about me, you know that in a thousand years I never would have confessed that I couldn't handle the investment. No way.

Or was his statement/question something of an altogether different nature? Was he simply asking, "Mr. Ziglar, as a wise and prudent businessman, do you feel the seventy-three eighty-five at this time is more than you wish to give in exchange for these two automobiles?"

If the latter is the question, then I have no trouble pleading guilty. I responded, "Chuck, that's just more money than I'm willing to invest in the difference." Pleasantly and gently he stayed on the offensive with another direct but simple question. "Mr. Ziglar, what do you think would be a fair difference to give in exchange between your magnificent four-year-old Oldsmobile Regency and our gorgeous new Cadillac Sedan deVille?"

The "Abraham Lincoln" Close

Please notice that throughout this entire presentation Chuck Bellows never once said anything derogatory or negative about my automobile. He used the Abraham Lincoln approach. Lincoln used to argue both sides of the case when he was presenting it to the jury. He would take the opposition's side, then he would take his client's side. He was very careful to bring out more points in his own favor, but when he took the opposition's side he was always fair, although he was undoubtedly not quite as eloquent as when he presented his client's case.

The "Previous Purchase" Close

Chuck's technique and psychology were perfect. Any attack on my car would have been an attack on me personally. After all, *I* had bought the car and *when you attack the purchase you attack the purchaser and their judgment.* When parents criticize or malign the boyfriend or girlfriend of their son or daughter, they are attacking the judgment, taste, and

intelligence of their child. *That's* often the reason kids rebel. That is not the way to win friends and influence people—or our children, *or* our prospects.

Be careful *and* tactful when a prospect says something derogatory about a purchase previously made. (Tact, as you probably know, is the art of recognizing when to be big and when not to belittle.) Statements such as "Boy, they sure took advantage of me!" or "They saw me coming!" can be disastrous for you if you agree with the prospect.

Example: If you say, "Obviously, they were not completely honest with you," or "I agree they did see you coming," comments like that will lead your prospect to think, *Yeah*, they *got to me, but partner, I'm going to watch* you *and I will guarantee that you are not going to get to me!* You wave a red flag and alert the prospect to be skeptical of you when you say anything derogatory about your prospect's previous purchase or a salesperson with whom your prospect previously dealt.

What do you say when your prospect makes a negative statement about a previous purchase? Try this: Look your prospect in the eye and quietly say, "In retrospect, Mr. Prospect, I'm confident that most of us would make some of our decisions differently if we could make them again. However, at the time you made this decision, under the circumstances which existed at that moment and with the information you had at your disposal, I'm confident that most of us would have made the same decision you did, so I wouldn't feel bad about something which happened such a long time ago."

The best way to get a prospect to make a favorable new decision is to make them happy with an old decision.

Make the Prospect Feel Good

The question is, have you been honest with the prospect? The answer is obvious when you answer the next question: Did you ever buy anything and then later wish you had not bought it? Reflect on that for a moment. You bought because you felt you were making the right decision. When you acquire anything of any significance, you do so because you figure it is a

“good deal” and in your best interests. Just remember that your prospect felt *exactly* the same way at the time they made their purchase.

By following this procedure Chuck was making me feel good. He was talking about my beautiful four-year-old Oldsmobile Regency, but that’s not all he was doing. By inquiring as to what I thought a fair exchange would be, he was also finding out early in the interview if I was a real prospect. He knew that if I offered $500 in exchange for the new car that I was just wasting time and he would do better to terminate the interview.

Same Ballpark—Same Ball Game

A similar situation could exist in the real estate business. For example, a home is listed for $395,000 and the prospect says, “Well, let’s make an offer of $195,000.” The real estate agent knows they don’t have a prospect when an offer is so low it indicates they’re not only in different ballparks but they’re also in different ball games! You need to know this as early as possible so that you can make a sound decision as to whether your time could be more effectively invested with the prospect at hand or with someone else. That is exactly what Chuck was doing.

The question “Mr. Ziglar, what do you think is a fair exchange?” will provide Chuck with the answer he needs so he can decide if I’m a legitimate prospect or not. Zig: “Well, Chuck, I’ve always believed in dealing in round figures and I personally am convinced that $7,000 would be enough difference to pay between those two cars [pause]—including the taxes and costs.”

Chuck looked at me in some shock and said, “Mr. Ziglar, you ask the impossible. First, you’re asking for a discount of $385, and then you’re talking about taxes and costs of about $350. That’s $735, and I don’t think there’s a chance in a million that we would even remotely entertain that idea. [Pause.] But, Mr. Ziglar, let me ask you a question. In the unlikely event we would accept your offer, are you prepared to drive this beautiful new Sedan deVille home with you right now?”

He Is Serious

All of a sudden it dawned on me, “That old boy’s serious about selling cars!” It also occurred to me that somebody (me) was a fixin’ to buy something from somebody (him) if somebody didn’t do something!

At that precise instant, I did to Chuck what your prospects have been doing to you all of your sales life and will continue to do to you as long as you are in the world of selling. At the moment of truth, when I had in essence made an offer and Chuck had given me some indication he was going to take me up on it, I started backing away. I crayfished on him and said, “Oh, I don’t know about that, Chuck, $7,000 is an awful lot of money, and my money just doesn’t come that easily.”

The Prospect Is Temporarily Insane

You need to understand that if the decision is a major one, at the moment of decision, according to author Charles Roth, your prospects are “temporarily insane.” Here’s why. On important decisions doubt and fear invariably enter the picture. In my case I was making a $7,000 decision, which for a financial conservative is a major one.

The questions—or doubts—which started to pop into my own mind were “Do I really want this color? Am I certain I want a Cadillac? Do I want to buy it now or wait until the model has been out sixty or ninety days or more? Do I want a Sedan deVille, a Fleetwood, or a Coupe deVille? Can I get a better offer somewhere else? Am I absolutely certain I want to buy, or would I do better to lease a car? If I hang in there, can I get a better offer from Chuck?”

In short, there is doubt, and doubt affects your judgment, hence the “temporarily insane” statement. Chuck pinned me down with the question “Mr. Ziglar, if we accept your offer of $7,000, would you be ready to go ahead?”

The major point I want to make about handling a prospect who has doubts is this: The kind of *person* you are assumes at least equal importance with the kind of *salesperson* you are. Before the prospect buys either your explanations or your product, they must buy *you.* This means they must buy your personality, your sincerity, and your credibility. The bottom line is they must *trust* you.

At this point I would like for you to carefully notice the confidence-building approach taken by Chuck Bellows the man, and the sales procedure followed by Chuck Bellows the professional salesman. I remind you that *the* major reason your prospect does not buy from you is a lack of trust (pages 47–48). For this reason you must understand that your career in sales started when you reached the age of accountability—not when you picked up your first sales kit or stepped behind your first counter.

Skill—or Credibility?

In the sales process you've got to move from one side of the table, where you think and feel as a salesperson, to the other side of the table, where you think and feel as a customer. That's what Chuck must do in this situation. He's got to sit in my seat, wear my shoes, and think my thoughts as a customer. He's got to have *empathy* (pages 96–97) for my situation as a customer if he's going to make the sale.

Combined with this, I want you to notice the negotiation skill he demonstrates and the sales techniques he uses as a sales pro. But again and again I want you to understand that *all the technique in the world* you—or in this case, Chuck—might use *is of little or no value if the prospect doesn't believe what you're saying and doesn't have confidence in you as a person.*

So what did Chuck do at this particular moment, when I started to crayfish or back out on the counteroffer which I had made? He took his pen, scratched the $7,000 off the talking pad, and said, "Mr. Ziglar, as a practical matter, let's forget about the $7,000, because I don't think there's a chance in a million our company would even remotely entertain that idea. I'll tell you what let's do. Let's look at the seventy-three eighty-five, because I'm certain we would go along with that price." Then Chuck lowered his voice, looked me in the eye, and with just a trace of a smile said, "Because, Mr. Ziglar, we don't back out on *our* offers."

Mildly dangerous? Yes. But only mildly because our mutual friend had said to Chuck, "Zig has been known to pull both legs at the same time," so Chuck knew he could kid me a little. When he said, "We don't back out on *our* offers," I was amused and not offended. More importantly, I got the message loud and clear that he was a serious negotiator and he expected me to be serious, too.

"So," he said, "let's talk about this seventy-three eighty-five, Mr. Ziglar, because according to the figures you had given me earlier"—and again he's using his talking pad—"we are offering you within $2,600 of what you paid for your Oldsmobile when it was brand-new. Actually, Mr. Ziglar, you have driven your car slightly over four years, and if you put your pencil to it, that breaks down to a yearly cost of about $600 a year." (He's showing me these figures on his talking pad.) Then Chuck lowered his voice, looked me in the eye, and said, "And, Mr. Ziglar, you can't even drive a Chevrolet that cheaply!" That made me feel good about my previous purchase (page 176).

The "Feel Good" Close

I thought to myself, Ziglar, you clever rascal! You're driving that big, high-powered Oldsmobile for just $600 a year and those other folks have to pay that much to drive a Chevrolet! Then all of a sudden it dawned on me exactly what he was doing. I said, "Now, Chuck, hold the phone! Dadgone your hide, I'm not about to give you any $7,385 dollars for that car! I've offered you $7,000 and that's it!"

Chuck has had dramatic training, I know he has! He didn't giggle. He didn't even smile. He simply said, "Well, Mr. Ziglar, it's out of my hands." Now he moves over to my side, the customer's side, of the table and *verbally* puts his arm around me. "But I'll tell you what I'll do. *I'll talk to the appraiser and see what I can do for you.* You can rest assured I'm going to do everything I can to help you get *your* car at *your* price, because obviously I want *you* driving a car from Rodger Meier."

Earlier Chuck had made me feel like a man of good judgment. Now he was making me feel important. Caution: Be careful. If you can't do this with conviction and sincerity—don't do it.

Chuck is using a subtle version of the assumptive key in closing, which I cover in more detail in chapter 33. When he said "your" car, "your" price, and pointed out that it had cost me only $600 a year to drive my Oldsmobile, he was taking me out of the Olds and putting me in that Sedan deVille. He put me in the seat and behind the wheel. He had already given me ownership.

Now watch him avoid future misunderstanding by repeating our conversation. Chuck: “Before I go back to the appraiser, let me make certain we are communicating. As I get the picture, you’re offering us $7,000 in exchange, provided that includes all charges.” Zig: “That’s exactly right, Chuck.”

With that comment, Chuck headed back to see the appraiser. He was gone only about three minutes when he came back and said, “This is a little embarrassing, but the appraiser was called home on an emergency and he’s not going to be back until tomorrow morning. My question is, will you be able to sleep tonight not knowing whether or not you’re the owner of this beautiful new Sedan deVille?”

The “Tie Down” Close

Zig: “Chuck, I think I can struggle through.” Chuck: “Now before you go, let’s make absolutely certain we are understanding each other. [Now watch him tie the sale down.] As you know, in the automobile business we don’t consider it an offer unless we have a signed agreement, but I’ve been in this business for a long time and I pride myself on being able to judge men of quality and character. I believe, Mr. Ziglar, that when you say you will pay $7,000 in exchange for the car, if that includes everything, that’s all the agreement I need, that your word is your bond. Am I right on that, Mr. Ziglar?”

What do *you* think I’m going to say to a statement like that? What would *you* have said? I’m certainly not going to say, “No, Chuck, I’m a liar.” When someone puts you on a pedestal like that, what are you going to do? So I said (modestly, of course), “That’s right, Chuck, if I tell you something, you can depend on it!” Chuck: “I felt confident you were completely dependable, so we’ll seal the deal with a gentlemen’s handshake and I’ll give you a call first thing tomorrow morning, hopefully with some good news for you.”

When I walked into the office the next morning at half-past eight, the telephone was ringing. Chuck was calling and he was motivated. “Mr. Ziglar, I’ve got fantastic news for you! I just talked to the appraiser and

we're going to be able to swap with you for just $7,200, including everything." At that precise instant I knew I had bought the car for $7,000.

Compromise Leads to—Compromise

As we say down home, "You can put this in your little pipe and smoke it."

When a company or an individual compromises one time, whether it's on price or principle, the next compromise is right around the corner.

Zig: "Chuck, last night I was impressed with your insight and wisdom in giving me credit for my integrity. I thought you were 'right on,' and since I am a man of my word, I will do exactly what I said I would." Chuck: "Mr. Ziglar, are you saying that you will go no more than the seven thousand?" Zig: "Chuck, we're not eyeballing but we are communicating. That's it." Chuck: "I'll be back to you in a couple of minutes." He called me back and asked, "Do you want me to bring it to you, or are you going to come over here and get it?" Zig: "Chuck, I like to have my cars delivered to me." Chuck: "I'll see you in a few minutes."

Two major points as we conclude the story: Number one, when I started to back out of my $7,000 offer, Chuck did not try to resell me. He knew I'd try to get the price even lower if he did. Point number two: Even though I met Chuck for the first time the day before I bought the car, he actually started selling me that car twenty-two years earlier when he made the decision he was going to make his *career* selling Cadillac automobiles.

In order to do this, Chuck knew he had to do two things. First, he knew he had to build customer loyalty so he could sell the same people time after time. Second, he knew he had to persuade his customers to send him other customers. How well he has succeeded is evidenced by the fact that the bulk of his business is repeat business. This is truly remarkable when you understand that we live in a highly mobile society and many of his customers relocate in other cities. My own purchase was initially motivated by one of Chuck's long-term customers.

How he does this is important. Number one, he has built his career on integrity. In my own case, I did not go see Chuck to *look* at a Cadillac. I had already *looked* at Cadillacs at two other dealerships. I was sold on the car. I went to see Chuck to *buy* a car *if* we could work out the financial details. I knew I could trust Chuck, and trust is the most important ingredient in the transaction. Number two, Chuck is extremely professional in his follow-through. Ten days after purchase, he called to see how I liked the car, if he could do anything for me, and, "Oh, yes, do you have any friends I should talk to about our new model?"

The first time I was in for service, the first man I saw, almost before I switched the engine off, was Chuck Bellows, wanting to know if he could do anything for me. That's not all. Periodically Chuck would call just to say, "Hello, and by the way, do you know anybody who . . . ?" Obviously, he was keeping his name fresh in my mind so when car-swapping time rolled around I would remember him.

Chuck Bellows is a professional. Neatly and conservatively dressed at all times, he creates the image of a friend and advisor who wants to assist you in selecting the right car for you and then work to help you enjoy your selection. That's good selling. That's the way to make every sale so you make more than a sale. You make a customer and a friend. This is the way to sell more now and sell more later. That, my friend, is career-building selling.

20

Everybody Is a Salesperson and *Everything* Is Selling

This dentist is a professional salesman. One of the true professionals in selling is my friend Dr. Tom McDougal. Tom is a dentist, and a superb one. He lectures nationally to other dentists on building a successful practice. Like *all* real professionals, Tom practices what he preaches.

On my first visit, the receptionist at the front desk was cordial, friendly, and enthusiastic. An assistant handed me the new-patient forms and encouraged me to take a seat in the reception room. Almost immediately after I completed them, another assistant came to take me into a treatment room for the preliminary examination.

From "hello" to "good-bye," all of them were enthusiastic and professional in what they did. Dr. McDougal, of course, handled the parts of the treatment that only a dentist can handle, but the staff members did their jobs in a professional way. Perhaps the most impressive part of the visit was the fact that not one, not two, but three of them "sold" me on the importance of using dental floss. Each one laughingly said that Dr. McDougal believes you should floss "only those teeth you want to keep."

The point is simple: He believes in preventive dentistry. I left with the strong feeling that everybody there wanted me to keep my teeth. That's practicing good dentistry and good human relations, and it's fantastic service selling.

Words Do Make a Difference

When I visited Dr. McDougal I noticed he used *positive words.* Many of these words are taken from the extensive list prepared by dental consultant Gladys E. Cook.

He talked about “restoration” instead of “filling” and about a “change in schedule” rather than any “cancellation” or “postponement.” I was in his “reception room” briefly, not his “waiting room.” At the end of the visit they wanted to know how I would “take care of,” not “pay for,” the services. His office called my office to “confirm” or to “verify” the appointment, not to “remind” me of it. I was told to “empty my mouth,” not to “spit.” They “prepared” the tooth instead of “grinding” the tooth. He gave me an “injection” instead of a “needle” or “shot.” I felt a little “discomfort” or “pressure,” not any “pain.” Yes, sir, words are important. They do make a difference!

Oooops!

Two other things stand out in the relationship. First, two nights later one of the temporary crowns came off. I called Dr. McDougal’s office and the answering service responded. Five minutes later my phone was ringing and ten minutes later I was on my way to the office, where one of Dr. McDougal’s associates quickly cemented the temporary back in place. That’s taking care of your patient (customer).

Second, since Dr. McDougal prepared three teeth for crowns, the visit was lengthy and the work extensive. That evening he personally called me to inquire as to how I was doing. Did I need a prescription? Was I comfortable? Could he be of any help to me? In all the years I’ve been going to dentists, I have never had a single one call me at home to see how I was and ask if I was hurting.

To be candid, I initially thought he was calling because he knew me professionally as a speaker and writer. I checked with other patients of his, however, and discovered that any time he does a significant amount of work on a patient, he always calls the patient that night to make certain they’re doing OK. That’s good dentistry—but, friends, from where I’m sitting, that’s also good selling, because that showed me his care and concern for me as a person.

Dr. Hugh Russell from Atlanta, Georgia, points out that often people will buy from us not because they understand our offer but because they feel we understand them. In Dr. McDougal's case, I will buy from him because he's a superb dentist *and* because he understands me and my needs when I sit down in his chair. Every professional salesman should be just that concerned and just that professional in looking after his customers.

This is best verbalized by Dr. McDougal himself in this paragraph which he contributed:

> The real secret to "selling" in dentistry or in any other profession or business is to speak from the heart instead of from the head or intellectual base. When the inner man speaks, the deepest form of sincerity is communicated. However, one cannot speak from the heart unless he truly believes in his product and/or service. This means that he must have paid the price by obtaining profound knowledge of his product or service. One must also believe this product/service is unquestionably what the customer/patient needs.

Dr. McDougal is not a "salesman" or "sales trainer" in the eyes of the public at large, but as a salesperson you will never read a paragraph any more loaded with sales impact than the preceding one.

Kevin's Xponential Insight #9: Arnold Morris, Professional Salesperson

When I first saw him, Arnold Morris was demonstrating knives at the Philadelphia home show. He had quite the moves, cutting through a Coca-Cola can and then the head of a hammer, a pair of sneakers, even a car muffler. He called his product "The Ginsu Knife."

Now, Arnold was a great salesman. In fact, he'd been doing this for dozens of years, forty weeks per year, doing pretty much the same demonstration in city after city. But he had fun doing it. And that's when I said, "Arnold, let's put this up on TV. You can do what you love but don't have to travel around as much." We made a deal. And it was one of the best deals I ever made.

But even though this situation was a win-win for each of us, it took off so well because I didn't look at him as a personal paycheck. Instead, our partnership was powerfully symbiotic. He brought me opportunities and I brought them to him.

In fact, Arnold and I kept up a friendship even to his last weeks on earth. And even then, his wife called me saying Arnold wanted to talk about another new product that I just had to check out. I thought, *Bless him, that's Arnold, through and through.* He was a great asset to our business and I can honestly say had it not been for Arnold Morris, I wouldn't have probably done the billions of dollars in sales that I did. Value your relationships and the relationships will bring value to everyone.

A Professional Service Station Operator

Several years ago, when service stations were service stations and not just stands with pumps that you use to fill your own tank, I met Tom Fountain, one of the supersalesmen of our time.

Never will I forget the day I pulled into his station in Decatur, Georgia, with an empty tank. Rain was coming down in sheets as I pulled up to the gas pump, hopped out, and made a mad dash into the station, signaling the attendant not to come out and get soaked because I was not in a big hurry.

I introduced myself to the owner and started the conversation with an untypically negative comment. “Tom, this rain is really tough on the service station business, isn’t it?” Tom very cheerfully replied, “No, Zig, not at all. As a matter of fact, this is one of the greatest things that happens to me.”

The “Rainy Weather” Close

I responded that in all my years I’d never heard a service station owner get enthusiastic about rain, and I asked him why he said that. He replied, “Well, Zig, while it’s raining it is true that my business slows down, but when we have a real gullywasher like this it washes hundreds of nails and pieces of glass into the street, and you’re going to see a rash of flat tires during the next few days.

“Now don’t misunderstand, Zig, I hate to see anyone have bad luck, but it’s a fact of life that when nails and glass hit the street people are going to run over them. And it also happens, Zig, that I have the greatest tire repairmen in this city, and we can do the best and fastest job at the best price of anybody here. That’s the reason people come to us. There’s nothing I can do about the rain falling, but there is a lot I can do about solving people’s problems when that rain does fall.” Wow! Was that ever a delightful visit! With an attitude like that no wonder Tom’s business was booming!

The “Spare” Close

On another visit into his station we were discussing sales strategy, and Tom shared a fantastic procedure he uses for bonus sales.

When a car pulls into the station, Tom and his crew check the oil, battery, and water as well as the fan belt. When the fan belt is worn and in danger of breaking, Tom says to the owner of the car, “Sir, your fan belt is worn. If you’ll get the spare one out of your trunk, I’ll be glad to put it on and it shouldn’t delay you but just a minute.”

Invariably the owner will say, “I don’t have one in my trunk.” Then Tom responds, “If you’ll take a look, you’ll notice this one is badly worn. I would really encourage you to get a new one, because yours could break at any minute and you might be stuck in a bad spot.” The owner, in an extremely high percentage of the cases, agrees to do so.

I’ll bet you’ve already finished the story, haven’t you? When Tom comes out of the station, he is carrying not one but two belts. He not only sells the one belt but in a high percentage of the cases he also sells the second belt. That’s the mark of the professional. That’s serving by selling—or is it selling by serving?

The Coach Is a Salesman

Everybody sells. And to repeat what Red Motley, the former editor of *Parade* magazine, said many years ago, “Nothing happens until somebody sells something.” Never will I forget that hot summer day in 1943 when I walked into the American history class being taught by Coach Joby Harris at Hinds Community College in Raymond, Mississippi. I was there under protest. I had to have the course in history in order to get my high school diploma, but as far as I was concerned it was a complete waste of time. What possible good would it do me to know what happened fifty years ago, a hundred years ago, two hundred years ago?

I entered the class with the attitude that I would take the class—and I would pass it—because I would learn just enough to “get by.” My real interest was in getting the course out of the way so I could take additional math and science courses the following fall in order to qualify for the Naval

Air Corps. My dream for several years had been to fly one of the fighter planes. We were in the midst of World War II in that summer of 1943, and I was really gung ho about doing my share. At the ripe old age of sixteen I clearly knew what I wanted to do with my life.

When I walked into the classroom that day, I expected the teacher to introduce himself, make a few light remarks, and get on with the business of teaching us history. The first part was right. Coach Harris introduced himself, made a few casual remarks, and then made one of the most professional sales presentations I have ever heard. By the time the "sales talk" was over, I clearly understood why I absolutely had to know my history. As a matter of fact, before the end of that first hour, I was a history major. Not only did I make an *A* in the class, but it was the only subject in which I consistently made *A*'s for most of the rest of my academic career.

Considerably more important is the fact that what Coach Harris said to me that day influenced the rest of my life. My interest in politics, in social conditions, and in doing as much as I can to make our country a better place to live can be traced directly to that first hour in the history class of Coach Joby Harris.

Professional Builders Sell, Too

As I've said on a half-dozen different occasions in *Secrets*, everyone from the housewife and mother to the professional computer technician is a salesperson. The same is certainly true of builders. In 1981 we initiated an action which had been in our plans for a number of years.

We bought a lot at Holly Lake, which is a pleasant two-hour drive east of Dallas, Texas. It had been my long-range dream to reduce my speaking engagements and concentrate more on writing. My personal objective is to positively influence the maximum number of people. I can do this more effectively through my books than I can through personal appearances.

We found in Holly Lake what we considered the ideal location because it was secluded, quiet, and beautiful. After buying the lot we had to decide on a builder. We only talked to one man—his name is Bill Tenison. From the beginning Bill's words and actions indicated that he *expected* to build our house ("Assumptive" Close). Bill had many things going for him, including an easy, friendly, professional manner and his *reputation.*

When we bought our lot we met the next-door neighbors who were in the process of completing their home. They told us there was only one builder to consider, and Bill was that man.

They enthusiastically pointed out that Bill did superb work, was a man of integrity, and did everything he said he was going to do *and then some.* We talked to people for whom Bill had built a couple of years earlier. They said exactly the same thing. Bill was understandably eager to take us to inspect homes currently under construction as well as those he had built several years before.

The general feeling in the community is that Bill Tenison builds every house so that he can be a good neighbor and friend with all his customers. Since Bill was in the process of building his own house at the lake and was going to be fishing and playing golf with all or most of his neighbors, his approach is certainly a wise one. (Can you imagine trying to play golf with fifty angry clients?)

So How Did He Do?

I can honestly say that Bill delivered far more house than I thought we were buying. I know little or nothing about building, but person after person familiar with the industry assured me that Bill had used far more insulation than was required in the specifications and that he added extra reinforcement which was not called for. On countless occasions he used 3” × 6” boards when standard practice dictated 2” × 4”.

As the house was going up, since we could not be there for every phase of the construction, Bill voluntarily took dozens of pictures and sent them to us. This not only enabled us to watch the growth of the house but satisfied us completely that we were getting everything we had bargained for—and then some.

The point really is clear. Bill knew that when his men drove the last nail into our house he was laying the groundwork for driving the first nail into all the other houses his satisfied customers are going to sell for him. As a professional, Bill is intelligently selfish enough to know that if he does a superb job, delivers more than he’s paid for, and satisfies me as a customer, I’m going to be telling people like you that if you ever build a house at

Holly Lake, Bill Tenison is the man who should build it. That, my selling friend, is what building a sales career is all about.

Since you don't let a beautiful home sit empty, this story has a sequel, and it's at least partially tied to what the late sales trainer J. Douglas Edwards called the "Puppy Dog" Close.

The "Puppy Dog" Close

This close is simple and undoubtedly got its start—or at least its popularity—from the early days when youngsters lured their parents into a pet shop "just to look" at that "doggy in the window" (for those of you who are old enough to remember that song). If the youngster and the pet-shop owner could not gang up on Mom and Dad and persuade them to buy that cute puppy, then the owner encouraged them to take the puppy home to see how they liked it. You can complete the story, can't you? The most important point is the pet-shop owner let his product (the puppy) sell itself. That's good strategy.

Interior Designers Sell, Too

When Bill Tenison finished our home at Holly Lake, interior designer Joyce Wynn and her beautiful staff (especially Kathy Adcock-Smith, who did a tremendous job of looking everywhere to find *exactly* what we needed) worked carefully with the Redhead and me to make certain it was furnished appropriately and according to our tastes and desires.

Never will I forget what happened when virtually everything was complete except for a large empty space on one of the walls in the great room. Frankly, I thought it looked fine as it was, but Joyce brought in a beautiful wall rug to fill the spot. As you might suspect, it wasn't exactly bargain-basement material. I liked it but there were some reservations about buying it. Joyce casually suggested that we hang it on a temporary basis and see if it "grew" on us. If it did, that would be fine; if not, no problem.

That made a certain amount of sense, even to this stubborn husband. It wasn't until that afternoon while I was jogging that I realized she had used

the old “Puppy Dog” Close on me. It was almost all I could do to keep from laughing, because it demonstrates exactly what I’m talking about.

Good technique works (yes, I bought the wall rug) even when the person you’re using it on is educated in sales techniques and procedures. Actually, if it’s really good, the prospect is not completely aware of what is happening. Even if they are, if the need and desire for ownership are there and the salesperson’s techniques are professional, there simply isn’t a great deal you can or want to do about it. Remember: The prospect *wants* their problem solved.

The professional is so effective you “forget” they are a pro. About a year after we moved into our home at Holly Lake, the Redhead and I were visiting with Kathy Adcock-Smith. My wife was sharing with her that many people have remarked how they love the warmth of our home. She also commented that some had expressed surprise that an interior designer had helped us, because the home looked so “natural” and livable, whereas many interior designers have a tendency to make homes look artificial and overdone. These comments obviously delighted Kathy, because she knew she had done her job well, that she had “sold” us her furniture, accessories, and ideas so well they had blended completely with our tastes, ideas, and concepts so that her expertise had given our home a beautiful added dimension.

The conversation reminded me of an early experience I had in the sales world. After consummating a sale for a set of cookware, I was getting prospects from my new customers. As I sought the prospects, I assured them I would simply demonstrate, and if their friends chose to buy, that was fine, and if they did not choose to buy, that was fine, too. To this statement the wife responded, “Yes, I know that is true because you’re definitely not much of a salesman.”

Since she had just given me a check for the largest set of cookware our company made, I was delighted with her comment. In the customer’s mind she had bought and I had not sold. Ideally, that’s the way every prospect should feel at the end of the transaction.

It Works on Million-Dollar Deals, Too

Several years ago, when the corporation was small compared to what it is today, an aircraft salesman called on Rich DeVos, the president of the Amway Corporation, to sell him a jet airplane. Rich is quite conservative and felt the corporation could not justify the purchase at that time. The salesman knew what the jet would do in saving time as well as wear and tear on Rich's body. He also knew the plane would enable Rich to see more of his distributors and substantially increase his effectiveness.

Here's the approach the salesman used: "Mr. DeVos, we have one special jet aircraft which would be ideal for you, and I would like to take you for a demonstration ride." With some reluctance but also with some excitement, Rich took the ride. He liked it but was by no means convinced he should buy, so the salesman said, "Mr. DeVos, we're not going to be using this plane this week, so we want you to take it and use it as if it were your own. Obviously, there is no obligation." A deal like that is difficult to turn down since he emphasized there would be no obligation on Amway's part. As luck would have it, Rich just happened to have an especially difficult week, with much travel in front of him. During that week Rich flew around the country in that jet faster, more comfortably, and more productively.

At the end of the week the salesman came back and tried to close the sale, but Rich was still not convinced the move would be prudent, so the salesman extended the "Puppy Dog" offer with a small string attached. "Mr. DeVos, since we have no specific plans for the jet this next month, why don't you just lease it for the month and continue to use it as if it were your own?" This time Rich was even more hesitant, but the salesman persisted, so Rich made even better use of the plane for the entire month.

By the end of the month Rich was "hooked," so when the salesman came back for "his" jet, Rich DeVos looked at him and asked, "What do you mean, *your* jet?" (By then Rich had grown accustomed to the extra speed and convenience, and it's tough to give up *any* satisfying convenience, especially if you can justify it in any way.) In essence, Rich had no trouble talking himself into an investment which would enable him to serve his corporation more effectively.

He bought the jet because the salesman was able to demonstrate the value of his product. In a nutshell, he let his product demonstrate that it would make Rich more effective in fulfilling his corporate responsibilities, so in the truest sense the product "sold itself" *after* the salesman used the "Puppy Dog" Close.

The Waiter Is a Salesman

Frank Infante was born and raised in Cuba, but when Castro and his Communist cohorts took over, he, along with other members of his family, made his exit to the United States. I met Frank for the first time one evening when the Redhead and I were having dinner at Farfallo's Restaurant in Dallas and had the good fortune to have Frank as our waiter. He's the best I've ever seen. He's thoroughly professional in his every move and is well versed in all the niceties of being a superb waiter. He speaks the language, knows the words, and has the grace, charm, and good manners that are vital to good service. He's extremely sensitive to the diner and their every need without smothering them with unwanted, unneeded attention.

Each time he serves us Frank starts by greeting us with a friendly, low-key welcome. After we've had a reasonable amount of time to look over the menu, Frank—with that innate sixth sense of his—approaches at what seems to be the precise moment we've arrived at our decision. He smilingly asks if we are ready to order. Generally speaking, there's a little small talk. I always ask about the specialties, and in glowing but not too detailed terms Frank tells us about them. I ask for his recommendation and he seldom hedges. He knows our tastes and will say, "I believe you would enjoy this particular dish. It's very nice."

However, since we are fairly traditional and there are three or four dishes we particularly enjoy, we generally order the Veal Oscar, Red Snapper Sauce Bretonne, or Coeur de Filet Helder (Filet Mignon with Béarnaise Sauce). His description of the salads is also quite elaborate and yet not too lengthy. In other words, he's inclined to "tell us what time it is and not how to build a watch."

The "Soft Service Sell" Close

It's amazing to me that Frank can bring us exactly what we want so quickly when we're somewhat pushed for time and yet time everything to perfection so that we can have a leisurely dinner when it's just the two of us. The tea and coffee are always available and ready; the hot bread is at our

fingertips; we never wait more than a minute or so when we've completed one course and are ready to move to the next.

As we finish our meal, Frank asks about dessert and we generally say no. Often, with a twinkle in his eye he will say to us that the cheesecake is particularly good or the cappuccino pie is especially nice and if we split one it would not be too heavy for us. His close is "soft," it's service oriented, and it works. One reason it works is that Frank is truly a "team player" who works with his "busboy" (that's a horrible title which the restaurant industry *must* change in order to help attract more quality people) in a most effective manner. He treats him with respect and courtesy as he requests assistance instead of demanding it. That's class.

From "hello" to "good-bye" Frank Infante is selling. He's doing it in a pleasant, low-key, and very professional way, but he is selling. He recognizes that his income is directly related to the effectiveness and manner in which he serves. However, as you watch Frank and listen to him, you get the distinct feeling that his entire reason for being there is to be the best at his profession. His objective is to make your meal a true dining experience. Needless to say, we never tip Frank just the standard amount.

It's a shame that every waiter and waitress can't have Frank Infante serve them a meal. I'm convinced that if they could, and if they were truly interested in becoming more professional, many of them could increase their incomes from 50 to 150 percent almost immediately.

Question: What would you do with this extra income? Answer: You probably could figure it out for yourself, but Frank Infante invested in his own restaurant and is doing well.

One of the mysteries of life is why any waiter or waitress (or any other salesperson) doesn't understand that all they've really got to sell is their attitude and their service. If they would learn some of the simple niceties of being gracious, pleasant, enthusiastic, and helpful, their income would increase dramatically. Yes, a *good* waitperson is a *good* salesperson.

The Three-Year-Old Pro

When it comes to selling, no one—but no one—is as persuasive or effective as a small child. Conviction is total, integrity is beyond question, and

enthusiasm is unlimited. Now throw in a completely open manner, combined with the right words, and you have an unbeatable persuader.

Never will I forget an incident with Suzan, my oldest daughter, when she was just three years old. Cindy, our second daughter, had made her appearance just six weeks earlier, and I had been on the road much of the time the previous three weeks. I pulled into our driveway in Knoxville, Tennessee, slightly before noon on that cold, snowy February Saturday. After my welcome home from the Redhead, Suzan, Cindy, and our live-in housekeeper, Lizzie Rogers, I was informed that I needed to go to the store to "pick up some things."

Since I was playing with Suzan and holding the baby while talking to the Redhead about the trip, I wasn't exactly thrilled at the prospect of going back out in the cold. However, those "things" were essential, so I reluctantly started putting on my topcoat, hat, and gloves. As I was getting ready, Suzan started asking if she could go. I explained that the weather was just too bad to take her out, and besides, I would be gone only a few minutes. She responded, "But, Daddy, I'll be so lonely." Zig: "Suzan, you know you won't be lonely. Your mother, your little sister, and Lizzie are all here, so you certainly won't be lonely." Suzan: "But, Daddy, I'll be lonely for *you*."

It really wasn't a fair fight. I was badly overmatched and never had a chance. Obviously, Suzan didn't know anything about "dominant buying motive" or the importance of making the prospect feel important (and really meaning it), but no sales pro with thirty years' experience could have come up with a better line. Needless to say, I didn't want Suzan to be "lonely," so she made the trip.

The Winner and Undisputed Champion

One of the really great professional salespeople in America was the late Billie Engman, who sold for the Saladmaster Corporation out of Dallas, Texas. At the time of her death, Billie had set and held more individual sales records than anyone in the history of the company. Toward the end of her career she was selling to the daughters of the girls she sold to when she started her career with the company in 1950.

Billie was one of those ladies with a truly professional concept and philosophy. She was incredibly well organized and was an extremely hard, persistent, and consistent worker. When she was out "beating the bushes," she had great singleness of purpose.

She's a Sales "Psychologist"

Let's look at some of her concepts, ideas, and philosophies. To begin with, she mildly objected to the use of the term *closing the sale.* She explained that she thought of closing as someone closing the door and shutting someone out. She felt that when she *opened* her sample case of products and *opened* her storehouse of information which she shared with the prospect, she was really *opening* the sale instead of *closing* the sale.

Billie had some keen insights into human nature and the impact we can all have on one another if we will but take time to learn. Despite her phenomenal success, she was extremely modest and felt that her role as a salesperson gave her the privilege and opportunity to serve. That modesty was best demonstrated by the fact that she had not reported her sales for several years. Not reporting cost her a considerable number of substantial prizes and the resulting publicity that was part of the package, but Billie preferred to stay out of the limelight and serve her clients.

According to a company official and her husband, Hal, who worked with her and was understandably proud of her, Billie sold so much more than anyone else that her major competition was with herself and her records. Like the professional golfer whose real competition is the golf course itself, Billie could tell you exactly what she sold this same week last year. She reached her goal to improve sales for the same time period so consistently that almost without exception each year was better than last year. She understood that over the years there had been several recessions. She admitted that any talk about recession frightened her, so she got out and worked harder so that her volume of business would continue to climb instead of start to decline. Now *that's* a great attitude!

She's a Smart Lady

Her sales psychology included getting the entire family involved in a presentation, because approximately 60 percent of her business was with families and only 40 percent with single girls. If a small child was present for the presentation, she involved that child and made each member of the family feel important.

One thing she did to psychologically gear the prospect for the sale was to eliminate tension or feelings of being "closed in" on the part of the prospect. When the closing process started, if she observed the prospect getting nervous and uptight, she asked them to get her a drink of water. As she explained, it's amazing what that brief interlude will do for the nerves of the prospect.

Billie kept meticulous records and took great delight in tracing her customers into the second generation. She grouped her leads into areas, and *when she left home it was with the sole purpose of seeing as many prospects as she possibly could*. She carried her sample case to the door so if the prospect was home she had everything needed to make a presentation. This procedure eliminated any loss of momentum or a chance the prospect might change their mind during the few minutes required to go to the car and get her samples. Since she went to the door *expecting* to get in, it would be inconsistent *not* to carry the sample case. Billie was low-key and was not seen as a threat to the people she dealt with.

Each Prospect Is Different

Billie geared her presentation to each individual prospect. Though she gave each one the same basic facts as they related to the product, she recognized that the single girl who will perhaps always be single has different interests from the girl who plans to get married, who also is different from the married couple. She personalized the use of the product to a large degree. She used what she called the "mirror of the future" and projected the prospects using and enjoying the beauty and practicality of her products not just in their own lifetime but in the lifetime of their children and even their grandchildren.

Billie was up-to-date on her current events. She tied her prospect's needs to current stories and used that information as a tool or sales prop for getting immediate action. She sold on love, caring, sharing, and

togetherness and the fact that her products contributed to all of those things. She used warm selling words as she discussed her program with her prospects. Words like *rich*, *loving*, *good taste*, *gracious*, *comfort*, *security*, *investment*, *caring*, and many other positive words were a part of her, so they were a natural part of her vocabulary. The lowest word on her sales-language totem pole was the word *pitch*. She contended—and I completely agree—that the professional *never* uses that word.

The "Total" Saleslady

Billie firmly believed you open/close the sale by the way you dress, by the neatness of your accessories and attire, by the way you smile, the way you walk, and even the kind of car you drive. She didn't believe in being flashy for fear the prospect might think she was being "too" successful, and though Billie could have driven a new Mercedes and made her sales calls dressed in mink, she prudently bought fine-quality materials, drove a more-than-adequate car, and gave the appearance of the quiet, confident success she was.

She never discussed with her prospects how long she had been selling (she started in 1948). She felt this would brand her as a person who was "trying to sell somebody something," when in fact she wanted to be regarded as a friend and counselor whose function was to help them make the best possible investment for the future.

Billie collected many testimonial letters and constantly updated the ones she had. What a new happy customer said about her product was a strong supplement to what her customers of ten years ago had to say. When she brought out some of the "oldies," it was to let the prospect know that an investment of this type was not a new idea, that years ago investors were doing exactly the same thing she was trying to get them to do that day, and that yes, she really was offering a *provable* lifetime investment. (Conviction *is* essential to closing.)

This "Partially" Explains Her Success

There are many reasons Billie Engman did such an incredible volume of business. I've already touched on some of those reasons, but there are three others that were as much a part of Billie Engman as breathing. First, Billie *expected* to sell everyone she called on. Not only did she *expect* to sell them, but she *expected* to sell them a large order the first time and an even larger repeat order the second time.

Second, Billie felt the order was the result of making a presentation, so she considered the "close" a natural part of that presentation. She gave everyone she called on a chance to buy by *asking* for the order.

Third, Billie kept records on *all* her customers. She knew *exactly* what they bought, when they bought, and how they paid for it. She planned her callback and prepared the prospect for that callback when she made the original sale. Equally important, she prepared herself for the follow-up call. She knew the initial order firmly established the trust of the buyer and put her in the position of being able to help the customer even more on the second sale.

The "Accessory" Close

Billie's callback was something else. Before she called back to complete the order, she carefully checked the initial order. Then she prepared three "accessory" offers. Her first offer was the "impossible" one. It was so big, so complete, so comprehensive, and so expensive there was no way the prospect could or would buy it. It was truly a dream proposal in that most people would only dream of owning so many beautiful table appointments. Fortunately for Billie *and* the customer, many of them didn't realize they couldn't have the biggest and the best, so they went ahead and bought the "impossible" dream order. As a pro, Billie challenged her customers to "go for the gold," to strive for the best, to reach their "impossible" dream, and the prospects responded. It's a fact: *Customer performance is often tied directly to the salesperson's expectancy. Billie's expectancy was always high.*

The second accessory order Billie prepared was also beautiful and substantial. It was a big order, designed to perfectly complement the

original one. This was her most popular reorder, partly because it was the "middle" offer and partly because realistically, more people could afford it.

The third accessory order which Billie prepared in minute detail to complement the initial order was still a substantial order but was obviously smaller than the first two proposals. After looking at the first two proposals, many prospects who initially felt they "couldn't afford" anything became enthusiastic buyers of the "minimum" order and at a later date followed up with a third and even a fourth order.

VERY IMPORTANT: On the follow-up call to sell accessories, Billie treated the call as a full-fledged sales *and* service call. She gave the customer the "full treatment" *and then some.* She resold herself. She resold the company. She resold the products. She resold the concept of investing for the future. She sold the idea of taking action today—not tomorrow. She had her customer get out their original order so she could check it over. Then Billie either bragged on the customer for taking such excellent care of the merchandise or gently suggested how they could take better care of it and receive even more benefits. All the time she was reselling herself *and* her products.

Wish I Had Known This

I personally believe that if I had known this procedure when I was in the business, my income would have been at least 50 percent greater because my customers would have benefited a great deal more. Incidentally, in case you are wondering about Billie's cancellation and delinquency records, it's a fact that her cancellation was extremely low and her delinquency rate for nonpayment was *the* lowest in the company at that time.

Will this procedure work for others? You betcha! Over the years, in addition to her own sales, which put her in first place, Billie trained numerous others who finished in the top ten nationally. "Will it work for me?" Only if you *use* it. Techniques, procedures, and ideas have no feelings and don't really care who uses them.

One of the real mysteries of life is why more salespeople who work in stores don't "go direct" and generate more business by developing customers who are loyal to them and their stores. Example: In our over fifty-six years of housekeeping, the Redhead and I have never once been

solicited to buy a house, diamonds, furs, furniture, or appliances. Doyle Hoyer, who sold me my clothes (pages 370–72), and Chuck Bellows, who sold me a car, are a couple of the precious few who have ever followed through with service and solicitation for future business. During our years together we have bought four homes, more than thirty-five cars (counting company vehicles), and four complete households of furniture and appliances, not counting dozens of major individual items. We've spent thousands of dollars on jewelry and furs, but *nobody* ever tries to sell us those items. They don't even make a serious effort to get us back in their stores!

Question: If you sell any of these items, are you *seeking* business or do you just wait for the business to seek you? When you make the initial sale, do you follow through to make certain your customer is satisfied with this purchase *and* plant the seeds for the next one? In athletics the follow-through is critical. The golfer, pitcher, kicker, boxer must follow through for maximum results. In selling the salesperson must follow through with service *and* reminders to buy if they're going to keep their customers (once you sell them you should feel as if they are *yours*) and build a career.

Point: If anyone makes a "significant" purchase from you, you should put them on your "super customer" list and "court" them as long as you represent the same company or sell the same basic product line.

Question: How do you sum up or in a nutshell explain Billie Engman? Answer: You don't, but if you could, you would start with love. She *loved* her family, her products, her company, and her customers. She wanted the best for all of them. Then you move to commitment. She committed to do the best possible job and utilize her talents and abilities to the maximum by utilizing every moment to the fullest. Finally, she saw herself as a person who was going to deserve (*serve* is the major part of *deserve*) the big sale, do the big job, earn the big rewards. She knew that was the way her customers, her family, her company, and her country would also win big. She was truly a sales pro.

PART 4

Imagination and Word Pictures

Objectives

To open your mind to the importance of developing your imagination for a substantial increase in your sales.
To teach you twenty-seven specific closes, *some* of which you can adapt and use in your daily sales life.
To sell you on the value of learning how to use the verbal paintbrush to paint pictures of future customer enjoyment to help you sell more *today.*

Closes and/or Procedures

The “1902” Close Revisited
The “Tightwad” Close
The “Diagram” Close
The “20/20” Close
The “No Procedure” Close
The “Marriage” Close
The “Imagination” Close
The “Click” Close
The “Special Occasion” Close
The “Tuit” Close
The “Challenge” Close

The “Twenty-Nine-Day” Close
The “Front Line” Close
The “Opportunity” Close
The “Companion” Close
The “Nice People” Close
The “Cokes and Smokes” Close
The “Corner” Close
The “Time Utilization” Close
The “Question” Close
The “Picture” Close
The “Preparation” Close
The “Fear” Close
The “Postselling” Close
The “Repetition” Close
The “Menu” Close
The “Oooh and Aaah” Close

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Imagination in Selling

According to my good friend and fellow sales trainer Merle Fraser, in the next twenty-four hours your prospect's heart will beat 103,689 times. Their blood will travel 168,000 miles; their lungs will inhale 23,240 times; they'll eat three and a half pounds of food; they'll exercise only 7 million of their 9 billion brain cells. They'll speak 4,800 words of which 3,200 involve something about themselves and not a single one will be about you or your products or services unless you figure out a way to involve them emotionally with your sales presentation. The only way you're going to get your share of their attention and their words is to use that imagination to make yourself a part of their world.

One of the most exciting things I can say to you about the world of selling is that most prospects really do not want to say no. The reason they don't want to say no is that *no* is so final. It ends the relationship. So rather than saying no, many prospects will say everything from "I want to think about it" to "I've got to talk to my lawyer, wife, husband, CPA, etc." This is shocking, but I actually have evidence that some of them will even *lie* to you to keep from saying no.

The "1902" Close Revisited

As we look at imagination in selling and some of the closes in this section, I'd like to go back to the "1902" Close, which I partially covered in the first chapter.

Years ago, when I was selling cookware, I used this close tailored to fit the cookware business and added a little imagination. I sold a heavy set of

stainless-steel cookware with a core in the middle to transmit the heat more evenly. This cookware was incredibly durable. As a matter of fact, to demonstrate its durability, I persuaded one of the local police officers to take his .45 caliber service revolver and, using a steel-jacketed slug, shoot our small frying pan from a distance of twelve feet.

The impact from a .45 is enormous. I placed the frying pan against a tree and the slug hit it dead center, but you had to look carefully to see where that slug had hit the pan. Armed with this visual aid and a notarized letter from the policeman, I had no trouble getting customers to listen to me talk about durability. When I said to them, "This is a lifetime set of cookware," they understood and agreed that it would last a lifetime because the average housewife doesn't abuse her cookware to that degree.

As you might suspect, the cookware was expensive when compared to the price of lighter cookware sold in stores. Many times the prospect would raise the price objection, "It costs too much." Zig: "How much too much does it cost?" Prospect: "Oh, it's $200 too much." To me that was an astronomically ridiculous figure, but remember, we've got to deal with the *prospect's* feelings. Again, as I will indicate on many occasions throughout this book, you now use your talking pad.

When the prospect said, "Two hundred dollars too much," I wrote down the $200 on the talking pad so the prospect could see it, and the dialogue went like this: Zig: "Mr. Prospect, how long do you think this set of cookware will last you?" Prospect: "Oh, it will last forever." Zig: "Well, certainly it would last ten, fifteen, twenty, thirty years, wouldn't it?" Prospect: "No question about that!" Zig: "Well, why don't we settle on a minimal figure of ten years. This means that the cookware, in your mind, will cost twenty dollars too much per year. Is that what you're saying?" Prospect: "Yes, that's what I'm saying."

Kevin's Xponential Insight #10: Frame the Investment Decision

Does anyone ever balk at the price of your product or service? Unless you're selling product for far less than it's worth, people will raise price objections. They might compare what you sell with something they saw advertised elsewhere. They might imply your prices are too high based on their own life experiences. Don't take these objections personally. It can be disheartening for sure, but that just means you haven't fully demonstrated how the value exceeds the price.

Higher prices for quality products is an investment, and sometimes you need to frame the investment decision. Zig used this approach all the time selling cookware that cost upwards of $2,000. Do you think he got complaints? Probably every day. But he continued to achieve selling success because he was selling cookware, not for the next meal, not for the next year, but for a lifetime.

I learned from the Master and applied the same secret to my sales approach. I'd seen a lot of blenders in my day, but the Vitamix took the cake. It sold for a higher price tag than anything else on the market—so we framed the investment decision. We set it up as the product that did what others could not. Other products had half a horsepower. The Vitamix had a two-horsepower motor! It made smoothies, but also made soups, sauces, drinks; it crushed ice, pureed fruits, veggies—you name it.

But we also wanted the customers to know that this wasn't a fad appliance. They'd be using it for a lifetime because the quality was so high. What's cheaper in the long run? One purchase of $400 or a lifetime of yearly blender buys? If you can successfully frame the buy, you can successfully maneuver around price objections.

Break Cost into Small Pieces

Zig: "Twenty dollars a year is how much each month?" Prospect: "Well, that's about a dollar and seventy-five cents a month." Zig: "OK, that's about right. How often do you cook?" Prospect: "Two or three times a day." Zig: "Let's be conservative and say twice a day, which means that in a month's time you would cook sixty meals [remember, I'm writing all these figures on my talking pad]. So if this beautiful set of cookware costs a dollar and seventy-five cents a month too much, that is less than three cents a meal too much to have the finest set of cookware on the market."

Ask Questions—Lead Them to a Decision

I continue: "Mr. and Mrs. Prospect, do you ever eat out?" Prospect: "Why, sure!" Zig: "How often?" "Oh, once or twice a week." Zig: "Do you ever tip the waitress?" Prospect: "We always tip the waitress." Zig: "How much do you tip her?" Prospect: "Dollar, two dollars, it depends." (Remember, this was 1962!) I'd write "3¢" by "Your wife" and "$1.00" by "Waitress." Zig: "Let me offer a thought and ask a question. The waitress takes the

order, brings the food from the kitchen to the table, and brings the extras like tea, coffee, and bread. Generally speaking, a busboy cleans the table and carries the dishes back to the kitchen.

"Your wife goes to the store, buys the food, brings it home, puts it in the cabinets and in the refrigerator. Later she takes the food out, cleans, prepares, cooks, and serves it. Then after the meal she takes the leftovers, stores them in the refrigerator, and then cleans up. Now, Mr. Prospect, in all fairness, if you tip the waitress a dollar [I'd circle the "$1.00" several times] just for bringing the food from the kitchen to the table, don't you really think your wife deserves at least *three cents* [I'd circle "Your wife" and "3¢" several times] for shopping, cooking, serving, storing, and cleaning?"

Imagination, emotion, and logic are all at work on this one. Chances are excellent you noticed the large number of questions asked in this dialogue (twelve). This is significant because it forced the prospect to put pressure on himself. When this happens, your chances for action are substantially increased. In this example, the procedure and the questions undoubtedly helped the husband put the wife's contributions in a more realistic and favorable light. The questions also brought the price into perspective and broke it down to such a low figure that it was affordable.

The "1902" simply means you break it down to a figure which is so low the prospect can visualize ownership of the product because they now see it as affordable. Three cents per use certainly put the cookware within reach, especially since we had demonstrated it would save more than that with each use. *This close makes it easy for the prospect to buy, and that's the role of the professional salesperson.*

Concentrate—Establish Credibility

This next close I'm going to share with you is a dramatic one. It's one you can effectively utilize almost regardless of what you sell. *However, I want to emphasize that every close and every procedure which I describe is not going to fit everybody and that in most cases you will have to adapt what I say to your specific situation.* That's the reason you need the notepad mentioned on page 13 to go with this book. One more time, this book is not a workbook, but it is a *working book* written to teach you *how* to sell more

effectively and to inspire you to translate the new "how to" into the old-fashioned *DO IT NOW* approach to sales success.

Many years ago I was working in the little community of St. Matthews, South Carolina. I have always believed in "cluster" selling, so I habitually went into a community and concentrated on a small area and quickly became known to the local people. Not only did this save a lot of travel and time, but it also helped me to establish credibility.

In St. Matthews, as in many other communities, after I'd been there a few times I became known as the "Pot Man." I didn't particularly like the title, but in those days at least everyone knew they were talking about cookware and not dope. When I'd drive down the street or highway, somebody would say, "There goes the Pot Man," and somebody else would say, "Yeah, I'm going to his party [cookware demonstration] next week!"

The "Tightwad" Close

After one demonstration with seven couples as prospects, I was making the callbacks the next day. I sold the first five, and when I knocked on the door at the home of the sixth couple, I heard a booming voice which you could have heard all over town, "COME ON IN, MR. ZIGLAR!" I walked in and there stood this giant! He was about six feet, seven inches tall and weighed close to three hundred pounds. A jovial kind of a guy who blurted out, "It's good to see you! Me and you both know I ain't agonna buy no four-hundred-dollar set of pots, but come on in, sit down, and we'll talk anyhow!"

For the record (and I think it *was* one!), that dude had eaten enough food the night before to feed five normal-sized people. I had bought, cooked, and personally served every bite he ate. Now he started the sales call by saying, "We both know I'm not going to buy anything!"

That's not exactly my idea of an ideal way to open an interview, but I grinned, looked at him, and said, "Well, Mr. Prospect, *you* might know you're not going to buy anything, but I don't." Prospect: "Well, I might as well tell you right now, I'll be glad to talk to you, but I'm not going to buy a thing." Zig: "You know, it looks like you and I have a lot in common." Prospect: "Oh, how's that?" Zig: "In my case, my wife spends my money

and my neighbors take care of my business, so that leaves me free to work! Now I don't know if your wife spends your money, but I can tell you your neighbors take care of your business!" Prospect: "Why do you say that?" Zig: "Well, today, every time I called on one of your neighbors, after I had talked with them, and incidentally, all of them *did* buy"—I wanted to get that little word in at that point—"each one would ask, 'Have you called on Mr. So-and-So yet?' I'd say, 'No, not yet. I see him later this afternoon.' Without exception, each one said, 'Well, let me know what *he* does!'"

Your Neighbors Don't Know You

"I finally asked one of them, 'Why does everyone want to know what Mr. So-and-So's going to do?' One of them grinned and said, 'Well, he's known around the community as being fairly conservative.'" The old boy just *hollered*, and said, "They probably said that I'm the biggest tightwad in the county!" Zig: "Well, one of them did say something about 'first dollar,' but I never quite understood what he meant!" The prospect half snorted and said, "You know perfectly good and well what he meant, and he might be right. I *am* a little conservative."

Zig: "Well, they might think you're conservative, but I think it's rather interesting that you were born and raised in this community and yet your friends and neighbors don't know the first thing about you!" Prospect: "What're you talking about?" Zig: "Well, I thought you said you were not going to buy a set of my cookware." Prospect: "I'm not!" Zig: "Isn't that interesting? You were born and raised around these people all your life, and they don't know the first thing about you!" Prospect: "What are you talking about?" Zig: "Mr. Prospect, if I remember correctly—and I believe I do—you told me last night you've been married something like twenty-three years." Prospect: "Yeah, as a matter of fact, this August will be twenty-four years." Zig: "OK, let me ask you a question. Were you sincere last night *[don't ever ask a person if he was telling the truth; that's an insult]* when you said you felt you could save at least a dollar a day by cooking in our set of cookware?" Prospect: "With this crowd I've got, I could save maybe two dollars per day. You saw how much I ate last night, and I've got four boys who eat just as much!"

Tie It Down

Zig: “Well, certainly you could save at least a dollar, couldn’t you?” Prospect: “At least.” Zig: “Well, if it will save you a dollar a day to have the set of cookware, that means it costs you a dollar a day *not* to have the cookware, doesn’t it?” Prospect: “I suppose *you* could say that.” (Note: Here’s where you need to be firm and strong—but gentle. This is where a good, healthy self-image is crucial. If you let them off the hook at this point, they’re not going to buy at the end of the interview.) Zig: “What *I* say is not important. Since it is *your* money, what do *you* say?” In this type of dialogue, voice inflection can be the determining factor. Prospect: “I suppose I could say the same thing.” Zig: “Actually, you can take the ‘suppose’ out, can’t you?” Prospect: “Yes.”

Zig: “Instead of saving a dollar a day, if I were to talk about saving fifty cents a day, that would be ultra-ultraconservative, wouldn’t it?” Prospect: “It sure would!” Zig: “OK, if this set of cookware will save you fifty cents a day, that means every two days you don’t provide your wife with this money-saving cookware, she reaches into your pocket, takes out a brand-new, crisp one-dollar bill, tears it up into a lot of little pieces, and throws it away, doesn’t it?” At this point, I slowly tore up a crisp, new one-dollar bill and threw the pieces on the floor.

Zig: “Mr. Prospect, you can stand the dollar loss, but *according to your neighbors*, you don’t get excited about it. And *according to your neighbors*, even though this beautiful home is yours, and not yours and the savings-and-loan’s, and even though the eleven hundred acres of land is yours, and not yours and the bank’s [and I smiled], you don’t want to waste anything. Now, Mr. Prospect, do you realize that on the basis of losing fifty cents a day, every forty days you and your wife take a brand-new, *twenty*-dollar bill and literally tear *it* all to pieces and throw it away?” At this point, I slowly tore up a twenty-dollar bill, but I did put the pieces in my pocket.

Let Them See and Feel Your Message

Let me digress for just a moment. As you read about me tearing up that money, did you feel a slight hitch in the pocketbook? You might imagine yourself sitting there as the money was being mutilated. I want to remind

you that my prospect was a notorious tightwad. When I was slowly tearing up that money, I was eyeballing him and I can tell you that cold sweat broke out on his forehead.

Questions Make Them Think

I looked at him and asked, “Mr. Prospect, what did you think when I tore up that dollar bill?” Prospect: “I thought you’d lost your mind!” Zig: “What did you think when I tore up the twenty-dollar bill?” Prospect: “Didn’t think a thing—I *knew* you had!” Zig: “Mr. Prospect, whose money was that?” Prospect: “I hope it was yours!” I assured him it was and continued, “Yet *you* really felt physical pain when I tore up that money, didn’t you?” Prospect: “I sure did!” Zig: “Mr. Prospect, can I ask you a question?” Prospect: “Sure.” Zig: “Don’t you feel even closer to money that’s your very own?”

Prospect: “What are you getting at?” Zig: “It’s really very simple. [Again, I’d go back to my talking pad.] You told me you have been married over twenty-three years. Now I don’t know how to multiply by twenty-three real fast, so let’s cut it down to twenty [I wrote “20” on the pad]. You’ve already told me that this set of cookware would save you fifty cents a day—minimum—which means it costs you fifty cents a day *not* to have it. If we put only three hundred sixty days in the year, that means it costs you one hundred eighty dollars a year *not to have* this set of cookware [I wrote the “$180”]. That means, Mr. Prospect [and I was multiplying this on my talking pad], that in twenty years you have already paid three thousand six hundred dollars [20 years x $180] *not to have* a set of our cookware, but you won’t give three *hundred* ninety-five dollars [I wrote “$395”]—that’s all it costs to *have* a set of the cookware—and you say you are conservative! Mr. Prospect, that’s government thinking if I ever heard it!”

They’re Convinced—Now Persuade Them

My prospect got real quiet and reflective, so I smilingly continued, “That’s bad enough, but even more amazing is that you are now saying, ‘Mr. Ziglar, in the next twenty years I am going to pay another three thousand six

hundred dollars *not to have* a set of the cookware [in large figures I wrote "$3,600"], but I'm unwilling to invest three hundred ninety-five dollars to have a set of the cookware.'"

As he thought about this I pressed my advantage by saying, "Mr. Prospect, I don't like to threaten anyone, but with that kind of thinking I believe it's only fair to warn you that I'm going to tell your neighbors all about you [obviously, I'm smiling]. Up until now they have thought you were conservative, but when they learn that you are perfectly willing to pay seven thousand two hundred dollars [I added $3,600 + $3,600] in losses *not* to have a set of our cookware but refuse to invest three hundred ninety-five dollars to own a set, I fear your reputation as a conservative will be ruined forever."

It got awfully quiet for a few seconds; then he asked me a question which I think is one of the most significant questions I've ever been asked. It revealed a great deal about human nature and had an impact on my thinking as a salesman. Question: "Mr. Ziglar, what would I tell my neighbors?" Now please understand that of all the people in our country, the most independent of the independent are the farmers. This particular farmer certainly fit that role. Additionally, he was a "big man" in the community. He was a wealthy and respected member of the school board, and yet he was asking, "What would I tell my neighbors?"

Get Them Out of the Corner

Why was he asking it? Very simple. When he was invited to the demonstration, he had told the hostess, "I'll go, but I'm not about to buy any four-hundred-dollar set of pots!" He was late for the demonstration, and when he made his entrance one of his neighbors kidded him by saying, "Well, I see you've come to buy yourself a set of pots." To this he had loudly (I heard him from back in the kitchen) proclaimed, "I've come to eat the man's food! I'm not about to buy any four-hundred-dollar set of pots!" Everybody there heard him, so he had literally painted himself into a corner.

At this point, having seen the demonstration the night before and the financial presentation today, he is sold on the cookware. He wants to buy and he certainly has the money, but before he will buy I've got to get him

out of that corner so he doesn't lose face with his neighbors. If I can do this, the sale is mine.

Learn This Lesson and You'll Sell More

Important lesson, my selling friend. Many times your prospect has painted himself into a corner by promising his wife, brother, friends, or another salesperson that he won't take any further action until . . . When the "good" prospect is not buying, we need to be sensitive to the possibility that he might be in a corner wanting to get out. That's a job the professional salesman loves to take on because it means sales for them.

I looked at him, grinned, and said, "Mr. Prospect, it's not only simple but it will actually make your neighbors love and respect you even more. I'm going to give you a receipt marked PAID IN FULL, because I know you're not about to pay any high-priced interest since you're 'conservative' [we both smiled]. I want you to take this receipt, go to each one of your neighbors, and say, 'Look what I've got!' I might add that you should prepare yourself for a horselaugh and a little good-natured ribbing. When that happens, just smile and tell them, 'Yeah, I know I said I wasn't going to buy a set of those high-priced pots, but when I said that, all I really knew was the price. When I saw that the cookware saved money and food value, as well as saving my wife a lot of work, it just made sense to buy it. Frankly, I love my wife and family too much to let my own stubbornness keep my family from getting something we would all enjoy.'

"Your neighbors will love you, Mr. Prospect, because it takes a big man to admit he made a mistake—that he made a premature decision. Then it takes an even bigger man to correct that mistake." He got up, and as he walked out of the living room to go to the bedroom to get his checkbook, he said, "You're the dadgonest fellow I have ever seen in my life!"

He became a good friend and one of my biggest boosters. From that moment, when people in the community learned that "Mr. Conservative" himself had bought, it made my sales even better and easier. I emphasize that all I did was take him out of the corner into which he had painted himself. That made the sale relatively easy.

The “Diagram” Close

Every product has a maximum price or ceiling. This price is all you can pay. (This is not true of services which are ongoing.) This is not true of benefits. If the product saves money by its use, the longer it is functioning properly and in use, the greater your benefits will be.

If you sell a product which saves money, like the set of cookware I just mentioned, I would diagram the example this way:

CLOSE: “If you buy the cookware, the savings will pay for it. If you don’t buy it, your daily losses will soon be more than the cost of the cookware. In other words, you can get it and let it pay for itself or you can choose *not* to get it and still pay for it through losses. Since you’ve got to pay for it whether you get it or not, doesn’t it make sense to go ahead and get it?”

OR: “As you can see, just by saving 50¢ a day, at the end of 800 days the cookware will have paid for itself. If you don’t get it, at the end of 800 days you will have paid the $400 through losses and still not have the cookware. So the choice is simple: *Invest* $400 and get the cookware, which will return the $400, or don’t invest $400 but still *pay* $400 through losses and still *not* have the cookware.” (Pause. Smile.)

The “20/20” Close

“You’re going to love your cookware, and we can deliver it on our 20/20 plan, which is $20 per month for 20 months with two $20 deposits in advance. Or you could take advantage of our 90-day cash discount plan. Which would suit your needs best?”

Note: Ben Feldman, possibly the greatest insurance salesman ever, says it this way: *“You make the sale when the prospect understands that it will cost more to do nothing about the problem than to do something about it.”*

And Another One

In 1977 we invested nearly $10,000 in a new copying machine. By our calculations that machine saves us at least two hours each day. At just $5 per hour (1977 costs), that's $10 per day, $50 a week, or $2,500 per year. Not only does this machine do better work, but we have fewer fouled-up copies, so we save money on paper. Because we invested in the machine we saved enough by using it for the machine to pay for itself. Had we *not* bought the machine we would have paid for it in actual losses and would not be able to show anything for the $10,000.

The point is clear. If you sell goods or services which save money, you should work on your presentation until it is crystal clear to your prospects that they *pay* for your product whether they get it or not. Since they pay for it whether they get it or not, they might as well go ahead and get it. One more time: Don't just tell them—show the figures at the same time. Prospects make the decision to buy based on what they understand *and* believe.

One more time: When the prospect *clearly* understands that it costs more *not to invest* in a money-saving device than it does *to invest* in the device, they will invest—*if* you ask them to and help them figure out a simple way to make the financial arrangements.

The "No Procedure" Close

Sometimes the best procedure is *no* procedure. Example: Recently after an exciting day on the golf course with the president and executive vice president of our company, along with a business associate, we were headed back home. We cut through the Dallas–Fort Worth Airport and took the access road. As I topped a hill, there sat a friendly policeman waving me to the side. I use the word *friendly* a little facetiously, because at that point he had a pretty grim look on his face.

I was honestly surprised because I did not believe I had been speeding. The officer asked if he could see my driver's license. I reached for it, and as I did, I pleasantly asked him why he had stopped me. He said, "You were doing fifty-one, which is sixteen miles above the speed limit." I replied, in a little shock, "Gracious, I had no idea the speed limit was thirty-five—I

thought it was fifty-five." He assured me it was thirty-five. I said, "Then in that case, I am guilty as charged, because I definitely was speeding."

He asked me where I was going. I told him I was going home but that I was in no hurry and therefore it just didn't make any sense for me to be speeding. He smiled and said, "Well, let me get you to slow it down, if you will." As he handed me back my driver's license, I assured him that I would.

I'm convinced that in this situation, had I attempted to give a "sales talk," I would have ended up with a ticket. I emphasize that what I said was effective entirely because I was genuinely shocked to learn the speed limit was thirty-five. I'm certain there were signs on the access road saying "35," but I had not noticed them despite the fact I'd been on that road a half-dozen times.

This reminds me of the axiom *When you've laid an egg, step back and admire it as you acknowledge what you have done.* That's exactly what I did. I acknowledged without hesitation I'd been speeding. In my own mind I'm convinced he made the final decision not to give me the ticket when I said I was in no hurry, because I really wasn't. My story wasn't fancy or imaginative, but it was effective because it was true.

In the world of selling, as I have indicated many times throughout *Secrets of Closing the Sale*, the completely honest approach is the best approach.

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Imagination Sells and Closes Sales

Thus far we have covered a number of specific closing techniques which I believe will increase your closing effectiveness. Now we're going to look at a significant close with a number of sales lessons built into the close. I tell this one in story form because the story is easy to remember and when you remember the story you will remember the close and the lessons. Again, I will be demonstrating the importance of effectively using your voice and applying your imagination to *your* sales situations.

I will also share with you the importance of ignoring certain objections and not taking it too seriously when some prospects say they're just "not interested."

We'll Have to Buy from Someone Else

Years ago when I was in the insurance business, one of the things that frustrated me most was this: After conducting the fact-finding interview, I would go back for the presentation, tell the story, and sell the product, the need, and our service, only to have the prospect look at me and say, "Mr. Ziglar, you know I'm embarrassed we've permitted you to come back. Although we recognize our need for insurance, if we buy any, we can't buy from you. My wife's second cousin's next-door neighbor's best friend's uncle's son's classmate has a friend whose daughter's husband is in the insurance business [maybe it wasn't *quite* that bad, but it was pretty farfetched!], and if we buy any insurance, we'll have to buy from him."

The “Marriage” Close

Obviously, it was a stall, and it bugged me that I had sold a need and nobody, including the prospect and yours truly, was going to benefit from it. One day while thinking about the problem, I came up with a solution and developed the “Marriage” Close. This close came from an idea I got from Frank Bettger’s book *How I Raised Myself from Failure to Success in Selling.* I read the book in 1948, but it was not until eight years later that I utilized this bit of Frank’s information and added a little imagination to develop this close.

I designed a “Marriage Certificate” and had it printed on beautiful parchment paper. When the prospect stalled and said, “I like the idea but I’ll have to buy from _____,” I looked them in the eye and replied, “I’m confident the individual you mention is competent and the company he represents is legitimate, since it is licensed in this state. [*Never* make a negative or antagonistic comment.] But, Mr. Prospect, I can do something for you at this moment that no other insurance man in America can do.” Obviously, that’s going to elicit the question “What’s that?” At that point I would reach into my briefcase, pull out the Marriage Certificate, and say, “I can marry you.” The reaction was interesting.

“Let me explain this to you.” Across the top the certificate said, “CERTIFICATE OF MARRIAGE.” Then, “This Certificate of Marriage, issued this 18th day of January 2003 (or ’04 or ’05 or whenever), is between Zig Ziglar and John and Mary Smith. By this marriage Zig Ziglar agrees to be available in time of need for John and Mary Smith. [I had typed their names in before I made the call.] Zig agrees to stay abreast of the trends in tax and Social Security developments so he can properly advise John and Mary Smith as to their insurance needs. He agrees to be available for consultation and help. John and Mary Smith agree to give Zig Ziglar the privilege of earning the right to serve. Cancellable for any reason by John and Mary Smith. Noncancellable for any reason by Zig Ziglar.”

Is This Legal, Mr. Ziglar?

The close: I would look at them and say, “All that’s required to put this marriage into force is for you to put your OK right here.” Almost without exception the man would look at his wife, grin, and say, “Honey, what about that? This fellow wants to marry both of us at the same time! Do we want to marry him?” Sometimes she’d laugh and say, “Well, I don’t know. It’s up to you.” Often one of them would say, “Well, he looks like a pretty nice fellow. Why don’t we go ahead?” Many times the husband would say, “Mr. Ziglar, now this is legal, isn’t it? I mean, it’s not bigamy. You’re not going to get us in trouble?”

I’d laugh and reply, “No, I’ve already talked to the governor, the secretary of state, the insurance commissioner, and even cleared it with my brother-in-law. Everybody says it’s perfectly all right.” Many times the man would chuckle and say, “Well, why not?” He’d grab his pen and with a real flowery twist he would *really* sign it. But a funny thing happened on the way to the bank. Never once did I get the Marriage Certificate signed that I did not also get the application blank signed.

By using the Marriage Certificate I’m doing two things. Number one, I’m using a trial close. When they bought the first idea—signing the Marriage Certificate—it made the second one a great deal easier to buy. Number two, I’m saying to the prospect, “I’m not selling you just for today. I’m selling you for the future. I’m going to be part of your life. I’m going to be your insurance man.” That’s career-building selling.

Now Adapt It

I’m confident you’ve asked yourself this question many times, because I’ve stressed it from the beginning of the book: “How do I adapt it to fit my situation?” One of the most excited salesmen I’ve talked with is Jerry Parker. Jerry formerly represented The Extracorporeal Corporation, which is now a division of Johnson & Johnson. Incidentally, the word *extracorporeal* means “outside the body.”

For over a year Jerry had been calling on the Los Robles Hospital in Thousand Oaks, California. He was dealing with head nurse Loretta Davis and was attempting to sell his products and services. For a year Mrs. Davis kept telling him he had the highest price and his company gave the poorest service.

To help you understand the importance of the call, his product is blood-lines. That's the line that transfers the blood from the body to an artificial kidney and then returns it to the body. A person on the system has to go through this procedure thirteen times each month, which meant that 156 lines were involved for every patient for a year's usage. Multiply this by forty patients, and as you can see, you're talking about 6,240 lines. This represented a substantial order.

During this year Jerry was doing two things. He was building a relationship of trust and friendship with Mrs. Davis. He was also listening every day to our training materials on selling. He heard the "Marriage" Close not just once but many different times. Finally, one day, half in jest, Mrs. Davis asked Jerry, "Why in the world should I buy from you, since your price is the highest and your service is the poorest?"

Jerry quickly searched his mind, came up with an adaptation of the "Marriage" Close, looked at her, and smiled as he said, "Because I can marry you." With that Mrs. Davis laughed uproariously and said, "Well, what in the world would Willie say about that?" Jerry quickly responded, "Don't misunderstand. Here's what I mean. As he made the statement he saw a brown paper bag lying on the counter. He reached over, picked it up, and quickly wrote "Certificate of Marriage" across the top. Jerry then explained, as he wrote, the essence of the "marriage" agreement.

"When you buy our service you also buy me, and I am literally going to be married to this account. I'm going to see to it that you get the best possible service. I will be your personal representative between your hospital and our company. I will see to it that things are handled in an effective and efficient manner so your patients will always be taken care of. The few pennies in extra cost will be far more than compensated with the assurance that not only are you getting the best product on the market but you're also getting my personal interest and attention. This is critical to the hospital because it directly involves the well-being of your patients. That is your *first* consideration, isn't it, Mrs. Davis?" She acknowledged that it was.

By this time Jerry had completed his writing, so he handed the "Certificate of Marriage" to Mrs. Davis and said, "The only thing necessary to put this marriage agreement in force is for you to put your OK right here." Mrs. Davis thought about it for a moment and recognized that it made sense. In addition, because of his pleasant and persistent belief that

his product was the best, she had developed confidence in Jerry and knew the validity of his argument. He had followed the right procedure, he had used the right words, his interest was in the well-being of the hospital and its patients. Mrs. Davis trusted him. She signed the "marriage agreement" and a few minutes later signed the official order form.

As Jerry was sharing this story with me, I can tell you he was enthusiastic and excited about it. Yes, *these procedures work*—if you will do as Jerry Parker did and adapt them to your specific situation.

The "Imagination" Close

One of the most amazing examples of the use of imagination is that of Paul Jeffers of Sacramento, California. In 1982 Paul made eighty-six speeches and sold $9.8 million worth of life insurance involving seventy sales and over $250,000 in premiums. Paul is a remarkable man who believes that failure to hit the bull's-eye is never the fault of the target, and failure to buy is never the fault of the prospect.

On February 8, 1975, Paul Jeffers lost his sense of hearing, but he laughingly said that being deaf gave him an advantage over other salespeople because he never heard anybody say no.

Not long after Paul suddenly lost his hearing, and before he completely mastered the art of reading lips, he was by himself on a significant interview with two prospects. In Paul's words, here is what happened: "I walked into their office, started talking to them, and they answered, and by golly, I couldn't read their lips. So I said, 'Gentlemen, I can't read your lips.' I pulled out my yellow scratch pad and said, 'I'm going to give each one of you a scratch pad and you write out your questions and I'll answer the questions you've written. Is that fair enough?' They both nodded their heads yes, so I handed them the scratch pads and they wrote all kinds of questions on that crazy sheet of paper! They handed them back to me, I looked at the pad—and I couldn't read their handwriting—either one of 'em!

"So I said, 'Gentlemen, I really have a problem. I can't read your lips and can't read your handwriting. So I've got two choices—I can walk out of here right now and forget about it, or better yet, why don't you let me give

you the presentation the way I normally would because I have all this material prepared? Let me give you the objections I think you would give me and I will give you the answers to those objections. All you have to do is shake your head up and down if you agree with me and from side to side if you disagree. Is that fair enough?' They both nodded yes to the suggestion.

"I'm charging through that presentation, boy, best one I've ever made! I go through the story, the objections, the answers to the objections, the whole thing, get down to the close, and I say, 'Gentlemen, is there anything about this plan you do not like? Is there any reason you can think of that you don't want to get started right now? Is there any problem in giving me a check for $3,800 immediately?' They shook their heads no, so I said, 'Make the check out to Standard Insurance Company.' They did, and handed me the check.

"Now most insurance people can get an application without a check—I get a check without an application! Now what do I do? How do I handle this? Where is my manager to help me? Obviously, he wasn't there. I was strictly on my own, so I said, 'Look, I'm going to give you a blank Part One of the application. Please print in block letters, very plainly. I'm also going to give you another blank Part One for you to sign. I'll transfer the information from the one you've printed over to the one you've signed; it'll be in my handwriting. We'll get you examined by a doctor, and we're both covered, is that fair enough?' They both nodded their heads yes." Paul laughingly says, "That's what I call a controlled interview, and I'll bet you a buck you've never had one like that any time!"

For years I've heard that you could parachute a professional salesman into a strange area where they knew absolutely no one and by nightfall they would be in business. I agree with that observation, especially if that salesman has the imagination, tenacity, will to win, and love for people which Paul Jeffers has.

Another man with imagination and all the other attributes of an outstanding salesman is E. U. Parker, Jr., of Laurel, Mississippi. According to Bill Sanders, who was regional vice-president of State Farm Insurance companies when this book was originally released, E. U. had been totally blind since age eight. Despite this fact, he became the first chartered life underwriter (CLU) in the mid-south region. In Bill Sanders's words, "In the automobile insurance business, it is very important that an agent see and

record prior damage to the automobile at the time it is insured. Our blind agent continues to ‘see’ and record more prior damage than any of our other agents.”

The stories of Paul Jeffers and E. U. Parker, Jr., simply emphasize that “handicaps” are handicaps only when you “see” or “hear” them as handicaps. Chalk up the stories of these two men as another reason I’m so excited about the sales profession.

The “Click” Close

People buy for some incredible reasons. A number of years ago when I was in Nashville, my brother Judge Ziglar and I were the home-office general agents for a life insurance company. We had joined the company early and helped raise capital through the sale of stock. There was a three-month delay after the stock issue was closed and the company was in full operation. All we had was a rate book, and in the competitive world of life insurance programming, if you are going to compete, you need to be able to make a full presentation with a complete proposal.

Since we could not afford a three-month income sabbatical, we decided to buy the equipment to print and figure the proposals. One of the things we needed was a calculator. In those days only three companies, Friden, Monroe, and Marchant, manufactured automatic calculators (they were not computers).

We eliminated the Marchant because of the ineptness of the salesperson, but we still had to decide between a Friden and a Monroe. We decided on the Friden for the weirdest of all reasons. *Everything else was equal*, but would you believe we liked the way the Friden “clicked” better? In 1961 that calculator cost $1,000. Despite this, the deciding factor was that we liked the “click” of the Friden calculator the best.

Point: People don’t buy for logical reasons. They buy for emotional reasons.

That’s why you need to be sensitive to some of the “little” things about your prospect and their needs if you expect to improve your closing percentages.

The “Special Occasion” Close

I spent eighteen years in the world of direct selling. During this time I developed a number of “Special Occasion” closes. Many times vacuum cleaner, alarm system, water softener, and cookware salespeople as well as others will encounter the following or a similar situation. This close, as it is, was originally designed for the direct sales world, but when you see how effectively a young furniture store owner used his imagination and adapted it for his business, you will know why I included it in this segment on imagination.

In the cookware business I demonstrated at night for a group of husbands and wives and made appointments to see them together the next day. However, on many occasions only the wife would be at home for the appointment. Generally the wife would assure me she could make the decision, but when I finished the presentation she sometimes attempted to terminate the interview by saying that on second thought, she was going to have to talk to her husband because she now had the information he needed to make the decision. That meant in most cases I was not going to get the sale. Don’t misunderstand. If she really *did* have to talk to her husband, I wanted her to do so. I knew from painful experience if she bought over his objections I’d end up with a cancellation or, even worse, a dissatisfied customer.

However, I needed to find out if it were a put-off or a legitimate reason for not buying, so I would say, “That’s fine. Since he gets home at six [I learned his hours the night before], I’ll drop back at seven, or would eight be better?” With this approach I quickly found out if *she* was really interested or if she was just trying to get rid of me. If she gave me the old routine, “Well, you know, we’ve been married for over twenty years and I know how to handle him,” I knew it was a lost cause.

As a salesperson you already know *there is a vast difference between understanding something well enough to buy it as opposed to understanding it well enough to sell it.* She understood the value of the cookware well enough to buy it, but there was no way she could understand it well enough to “sell” it to her husband. I had spent years learning how to explain it well enough to sell it and she had seen *one* demonstration.

When the housewife stalled on giving me the appointment, I responded with, “Let me ask you a question. What time does your husband get home with the groceries?” Housewife: “What do you mean?” Zig: “I assume he does buy the groceries.” Housewife: “No, he sure doesn’t!” Zig: “Well, who does?” Housewife: “I buy the groceries!” Zig: “Have you always bought them?” Housewife: “Why, certainly.” Zig: “Boy, groceries are expensive, aren’t they?” Housewife: “They sure are!” Zig: “I’ll bet you they cost you twenty, twenty-five dollars a week, don’t they?” Invariably she’d say, “What do you mean, twenty or twenty-five? You mean a hundred and twenty or twenty-five!” Zig: “You mean they cost more than twenty or twenty-five dollars?” Housewife: “You’ve never bought groceries!” Zig: “Let me ask you, would fifty dollars a week be a conservative estimate of what you spend on groceries?” Housewife: “It sure would.”

After All, Mrs. Prospect, You Picked Him

Zig: “Mrs. Prospect, that being the case [and again, back to our talking pad], you invest fifty dollars a week for groceries [write it down]. Let’s take that fifty-dollar figure times just fifty weeks in a year. That means in a year’s time you spend twenty-five hundred dollars for groceries. Now, Mrs. Prospect, according to what you tell me, you’ve been married twenty years. Twenty years times twenty-five hundred dollars per year is fifty thousand dollars your husband has already trusted you to spend for groceries. I’m not being unkind, Mrs. Prospect, but I’ll bet you can’t show me more than a hundred dollars’ worth of groceries right now for the whole fifty thousand, can you?”

We would both laugh and she’d say, “Why, of course not!” Then I’d say, “Mrs. Prospect, he has already trusted you to invest fifty thousand dollars for food. Don’t you honestly think he will trust you to invest just four hundred more to cook the next fifty thousand dollars’ worth of food in the *best* and most economical manner?”

Here’s Why He Married You

If that one didn't get the order, I would add this: "One of the reasons he tells folks he married you is that he admires your judgment, Mrs. Prospect, for selecting him." I'd get really quiet, smile, look her in the eye, and say, "Now you know if he trusted you to pick out your own husband, he's going to trust you to invest a few dollars in a set of cookware to cook *his* food." I sold lots of cookware on that particular one!

Don't misunderstand. I personally do not believe any salesperson can sell everybody they talk with. However, I do believe with a little imagination, most of us can increase our closing percentages considerably. I also know the most frustrating experience a salesperson has is to miss a sale they know they should have made. Not only does this affect their own income for the moment but more importantly it makes it impossible for them to render any service to that person. I simply want to give that prospect every opportunity to make a favorable decision.

In conjunction with this, many times I'm asked the question, "Just how long should you stay with a prospect?" There's no set rule or specific answer to that one. It's something you have to "feel" and something you learn from experience. My own barometer was that I stayed as long as the prospect displayed obvious interest or until they emphatically said they were not going to buy.

It Works in Retail Stores, Too

As I was preparing the original manuscript of this book, Randy Cooper, an excited young furniture store owner (who doesn't believe in recessions!) dropped by my office to see me. Unfortunately, I've lost track of Randy, but at that time Randy owned Cooper's Home Furnishings in Enid, Oklahoma, and was tremendously excited about his business and how he adapted this close to make "one of the easiest sales I've ever made."

In December of 1982, a lady and her daughter came into his store to look for a recliner which her husband was going to buy for her Christmas present. She found exactly what she wanted, and the investment was $449. She told Randy she would talk to her husband about it. Fortunately, when the lady walked in Randy had been listening to this "Special Occasion" Close. Here's how he adapted it.

Randy: “Mrs. Prospect, I’m a single parent and keep my two children three days each week. I buy my groceries myself and they cost me about a hundred dollars a week.” Prospect: “I buy my groceries, too, and that’s about what mine cost.” Randy: “A hundred dollars a week is over *five thousand dollars a year* [strong voice emphasis], and I’ll bet you don’t even talk it over with your husband, do you?” At this point, Randy said, the lady stuck her chin out, looked right at her daughter, and said, “I’ll take it!”

Incidentally, Randy started his business without any sales training, and in our brief encounter he expressed delight and a little surprise that these things actually work. A real shocker came on an adaptation of the “Alternate of Choice” Close tied to the “Assumptive” Close. A man and his wife had selected a number of items which came to a substantial dollar amount. The wife told Randy they would go home and “think about it.” Randy suddenly became “hard of hearing,” looked at the husband, and asked, “Do you want to take this home yourself or do you want us to deliver it?” Husband to wife: “What do we want to do?” Wife: “Shoot, they charge for delivering. We’ll take it ourselves.” (Remember, this is the same lady who just twenty seconds earlier was going to go home and “think about it.”)

One more time: I’m convinced that *many sales are lost or missed simply because the salesperson doesn’t ask the prospect to buy*.

The “Tuit” Close

Many times in the world of selling there are people whom you can nudge over the line, or should I say “on” the line, with a little humor. Never will I forget a company I called on to sell an $18,000 sales training package. Management was sold on the program and had decided to buy, but they were procrastinating. They kicked it back and forth and back and forth, but always ended up saying, “We will let you know.” Zig: “Do you have any time frame?” Company: “Probably within the next thirty, sixty, ninety days.” Zig: “But you seem to be sold and you really want it.”

Company: “Yes, we do!” Zig: “You definitely are eventually going to go ahead and do this, aren’t you?” Company: “We sure are.” Zig: “In other words, just as soon as you get around to it, then you’re going to go ahead and start this training program?” Company: “We sure are.”

With that I looked at them, smiled, and said, “Well, gentlemen [there were four of them involved], let me say this. I’ve thoroughly enjoyed dealing with you because I can see you are sincere. When you tell me you’re going to start this training program as soon as you get around to it, I know you are serious, so let me give you my card.

“My card, as you can plainly see, is round and has my name, address, and phone number on one side. On the other side it has the word TUIT. Now that spells ‘tuit.’ It is round and it’s a ‘tuit,’ so it is a ‘round tuit.’ Since you said you were going to start our training program just as soon as you ‘got around to it,’ let me be the first to congratulate you, because you’ve now got your ‘round tuit,’ so we can get your training program started immediately.”

Are You Kidding Me?

Now you might be thinking to yourself, “C’mon, Ziglar, you’ve got to be kidding! You mean those guys went ahead and bought because you put that one on ’em?” I mean to tell you exactly that, but don’t misunderstand. I didn’t walk in and say, “As soon as you fellows get around to it, you’re probably going to start a good training program, aren’t you?” That’s crazy. I had done my homework. I’d laid the groundwork; I’d established the need and the fact that our program met their needs. In addition, the work I had done with them previously had enabled us to establish rapport and trust. All the TUIT did was jump-start them and get them into immediate action.

“Maybe” Will Kill You in Selling

Action now really is the objective of the sales call. I’ve said it before and I’ll say it a dozen times. The prospects who say yes will not run you out of the sales business. The prospects who say no won’t put you out of business. But those prospects who say *maybe* will not only put you out of business, they’ll run you out of your mind, especially if you are in direct sales.

Here’s why. If you take each person seriously who says they will “buy later,” you will build a backlog of false security which you plan to “cash” at an opportune time. Obviously, if you are in an industry in which callbacks

are a way of life—like detailing doctors on new drugs, offering a new line to a department store which has carried a competitive line for "umpteen" years, etc.—and you promise to see them on your next trip, you keep that commitment.

The "Tuit" Close, like most closes, fits a specific need at a specific time. It is true there are occasions when you can kid a prospect into doing something you could not seriously talk them into doing. Again, *you need to study your prospect and your situation, throw in a little common sense, and as our Australian friends would say, "give it a go."*

The "Challenge" Close

Sales trainer and management development expert Larry Wilson, before he launched his career in the world of sales and management development, was one of the top life insurance men in the country. He developed and used what I call the "Challenge" Close. On his sales calls, Larry took a marble, a baseball, and a beach ball with him. When he started to close the sale, if the prospect gave him a lot of resistance—especially from a financial point of view—Larry would take the marble and ask the prospect to put it in his pocket. Then Larry would say, "Mr. Prospect, the marble is so small and light you are unaware it's there. In a few days you will forget it altogether."

Next, Larry took out his baseball and said, "Mr. Prospect, you could struggle and get this baseball into your pocket. You could carry it wherever you go, but every step you take and every move you make you will know it is there." Next, Larry took the beach ball out of his briefcase, inflated it, and said, "Now there's no way you can carry this in your pocket.

"That's the way it is with life insurance. At your age, if you start today, the premiums will be like carrying this marble. They are so small you soon will forget you carry them. If you wait a few years, it will be like carrying the baseball. You can do it, but you will always know they are there. If you wait too long, it will be like carrying this beach ball. You just couldn't do it. So, Mr. Prospect, you really are not making a decision today to buy or not to buy life insurance. You're deciding, 'Do I carry the marble? Do I carry the baseball? Or do I carry the beach ball?' I challenge you, Mr. Prospect, carry the marble! It will be easier for you and better for your family."

Many times the response came back, “Well, gee, I had never thought about it quite that way.” To that, Larry would say, “By the way, the price of marbles today is just _____, and you can handle it on a yearly, quarterly, or monthly basis. Which would be more convenient for you?” Needless to say, Larry sold a lot of insurance.

The “Twenty-Nine-Day” Close

When I was in the life insurance business, one of the things that frequently bugged me was the fact that on occasion I could not uncover the prospect’s real objection. I felt confident, in most cases, that I could effectively deal with the spoken objection, but the unspoken one is far more difficult to handle. As a matter of fact, on occasion it borders on the impossible.

Never will I forget one evening when I was calling on a prospect who had a need for more comprehensive life insurance coverage. He was in a financial position to take care of that need and was deeply committed to the well-being of his family. However, I was making zero progress with him as he brought up stalls and objections with little or no validity. It became increasingly obvious that I was not going to make the sale unless I did something imaginative to “smoke out” the real objection.

With this in mind, I searched my memory bank and came up with the germ of an idea which had been planted by a speaker (his identity escapes me) at a seminar several years earlier. I took that idea, altered it considerably, looked at my prospect, and said, “Mr. Prospect, I don’t know why you’re hesitating to make this decision. You have already indicated your need; you apparently are financially in a position to provide the coverage; and your love for your family is obvious. The only thing which enters my mind is the possibility that perhaps I’ve been offering you the wrong product. Perhaps we should be talking about our ‘Twenty-Nine-Day Agreement’ rather than the agreement which I have been discussing with you.”

Out Comes the Talking Pad

At this point I turned to my talking pad and said, “Very briefly let me explain the Twenty-Nine-Day Agreement. First of all, it carries the same face amount of insurance which you’ve indicated you need. Second, the retirement benefits are exactly the same, and that’s good because you’ve emphasized the figure we have chosen is a minimal one. Third, the Twenty-Nine-Day Agreement provides both waiver of premium and double indemnity in the event you become disabled and can’t make the payments or are accidentally killed. Incidentally, since we mentioned premium, the premium on this Twenty-Nine-Day Agreement is only 50 percent as much as it is on the standard agreement. Would that suit your needs better?”

The prospect looked at me with some astonishment and said, “Well, it certainly suits my pocketbook better, but what do you mean by a Twenty-Nine-Day Agreement?”

Frankly, it was all I could do to keep a straight face as I said, “What that means, Mr. Prospect, is that you’re covered twenty-nine days out of every month. Since this is April and there are only thirty days in the month, you will be covered every day but one and the company will let you select that day. It might be that you would prefer a Saturday or a Sunday.” Then I stopped and said, “No, that would not be a good thing, because you will probably be at home and, statistically speaking, home is the most dangerous place for you to be.”

Then I looked at my prospect and apologetically said, “In all fairness, Mr. Prospect, if you should elect to ask me to leave your home [or office] at this point, you would be fully justified. I’ve been doing something which I really have no right to do. I have apparently been making light of the future well-being of your family, and you’re obviously the kind of man who takes your family responsibilities very seriously.

“I strongly suspect that when I suggested this Twenty-Nine-Day Agreement would leave you uninsured one or two days every month, the thought entered your mind that you might well die or be killed on one of those days.”

Breathe Easy, Mr. Prospect. “Let me put your mind at ease, Mr. Prospect. There isn’t an insurance commissioner in the world who would permit the sale of a Twenty-Nine-Day Agreement. I took the liberty of suggesting it, Mr. Prospect, because I knew you would be concerned about even *one* day not being covered. Considering this, I knew you were not

about to leave your family's future at the mercy of chance *every* day if you could possibly avoid it. You do feel that way, don't you, Mr. Prospect?

"I believe you're the kind of man who will relate to the agreement you and I have talked about from the beginning. That agreement, Mr. Prospect, will cover you twenty-four hours out of every day, seven days out of every week, regardless of where you are and what you're doing. That's the kind of protection you want for your family, isn't it, Mr. Prospect?"

Not only did I make the sale that night, but I used that close many times during my career in the life insurance business. I did not make a sale every time I used it, but there were many sales I did make because I took the germ of an idea gathered at a long-ago sales meeting and tailored that idea to fit my specific situation.

I cannot say this often enough or strongly enough: If you're going to be professional in selling, you must read, study, and listen to motivational and educational training materials on a daily basis. You must attend clinics and seminars conducted by the professionals. *Then you must work at adapting and applying these principles and ideas to fit your specific situation. That is the way to stay inspired, informed, and up-to-date.*

Imagination and Common Sense

It seems trite to say, but in the world of selling we need to find out the prospect's major interests and then show them how our product will meet their needs and satisfy their interests.

During World War II, or so the story goes, GI insurance was introduced. In simple terms it meant that for a minimal premium of six or seven dollars a month, ten thousand dollars in life insurance was provided. If a serviceman was killed, his beneficiaries received the ten thousand dollars. It was a super deal, but like everything else, it had to be sold.

A young lieutenant called his infantry company to attention, explained the policy in great detail, and passed out papers for those who were interested in signing up for the insurance. Virtually no one bought. An old sergeant asked the young lieutenant for permission to explain the program. The lieutenant reluctantly agreed and felt confident that if he could not sell the insurance, the sergeant couldn't.

The “Front Line” Close

The sergeant stood up and in simple eloquence explained it this way: “Men, as I understand it, here’s the program. You’re going to be sent overseas. If you buy the insurance and get killed, the government is going to send your family ten thousand big, beautiful dollars. If you don’t get the insurance and you get killed, the government is not going to send your family anything. My question is this: Who do you think the government is going to send to the front lines first? The ones who would cost ten thousand dollars if they’re killed, or the ones who would cost nothing if they’re killed?” The men bought the insurance.

In reality I doubt that the story is true. However, as a practical matter, it illustrates the point perfectly. Point: Regardless of what you sell, make it crystal clear that your prospect is better off to buy than not to buy.

Sell Where You Are

In 1952 I was living in Florence, South Carolina, but selling and building part of my sales organization in Wilmington, North Carolina. Late one Saturday evening I was driving too fast on my way back to Florence. A highway patrolman stopped me and proceeded to give me a ticket. Because we had a mutual friend, he let me go without paying the bill that night on the condition that I stop in Whiteville, North Carolina, on Monday and pay the ticket on my way back to Wilmington.

The “Opportunity” Close

I vividly remember the amount of the ticket. It was thirty dollars. In 1952 that was a considerable sum of money. On Monday I stopped by the courthouse to pay the fine. As I gave the money to the young woman who was handling the tickets, the thought occurred to me that perhaps I could recoup my loss by taking advantage of this opportunity. Since I had nothing to lose, the following dialogue took place.

Zig: “I wonder if you’d mind if I ask you a couple of questions?” Single girl (with a smile): “No.” Zig: “I just wonder, since you’re single and working, if you are saving a portion of the money you’re earning?” Single girl: “Yes, I am.” Zig: “If you should see something extremely nice, which you definitely will need later on, would you be in a position to save an additional twenty-five cents a day to get it, provided you really wanted it?” Single girl: “Yes, I could.” Zig: “Well, if I had something in my car which was really outstanding, truly beautiful, and something which you not only will need but will use for the rest of your life, would you be courteous enough to spend five minutes looking at it?” Single girl: “I’d be happy to.” Zig: “Excuse me for a moment.”

I quickly stepped back out to my car and brought my cookware samples into the office. I made a short but very enthusiastic demonstration and asked the obligating question. After I asked the obligating question, she turned to a married lady who was about ten years older and said, “What would you do, if you were me?”

Before the other lady could answer, I interrupted and said, “Excuse me for interrupting, but let me ask you a question. If you were in this girl’s position, but knowing what you know about all of the expenses and obligations you have as a married person with a growing family, if you had had the same opportunity she has of acquiring this beautiful set of cookware before you were married, in retrospect, what would you do?” Without a moment’s hesitation the married lady said, “I would buy it.” With that I turned to the single girl and said, “And that’s what you want to do, isn’t it?” She smiled and said, “Yes,” so I wrote the order.

The “Companion” Close

When I finished writing the order, I turned to the married lady and said, “Just because you did not have the chance to get it ten years ago does not mean that you should continue to deny yourself and your family this beautiful set of cookware for the rest of your life, does it?” She said, “No, it doesn’t.” So I said, “I suppose you want the same set, don’t you?” She said, “Yes, I do.”

I made the second sale because (a) I was aware it was there and (b) I asked for the order. I'm convinced that many sales are missed not because of poor technique but because of *no* technique. *Ask for the order.*

Those sales were two of the easiest I have ever made, and my commissions more than paid for my ticket. As a matter of fact, later that day I encountered that same highway patrolman, but this time I wasn't speeding, so I waved him down and thanked him for giving me the ticket!

I tell this story to say you should be so wrapped up in what you're doing you instinctively take advantage of every sales opportunity that comes your way.

The "Nice People" Close

The more commonplace and competitive your business is, the more important it becomes for you to develop and use your imagination. Many times this really boils down to you, the salesperson or merchant, being aware of your customers' needs and concentrating on the best procedure to meet those needs. For example, when we stopped at Tiller's Café and Shell Station in the little town of Chillicothe, Texas, even though the station was self-service for gasoline, we still got a little "extra."

When my wife and I stopped for gasoline, the lady asked for my auto license number. Since I did not know it, I had to walk back to my car to get it for her. She wrote my tag number on a gummed piece of white paper and stuck it on the back of my credit card. As she did this, she explained that now I would always have my tag number with me. *Nice touch.* Then she pulled out a piece of cardboard with a sheet on it and explained that she had listed all of her local customers so when they came in to buy, especially in bad weather, they would not have to go back out to get their tag numbers.

Not earth-shattering, but it is one of those "little things" which brings customers back to the store time after time. That's career-building selling. That is the way nice, considerate, *ambitious* people do things.

The "Cokes and Smokes" Close

One of the most imaginative closes I've ever seen was developed by Hal Krause, the founder of American Salesmasters and later Crestcom, who worked his way through college selling cookware, china, crystal, and flatware to single girls. After completing the demonstration he smiled at the prospect and said:

> The story I'm about to tell in every way is true.
> I'm the only man alive to share this tale with you.
>
> You'll know yourself that I've told the truth
> the minute I get through,
> Because I never lie or stretch the truth,
> like some other salesmen do.
>
> If you don't buy a set of pots from me you'll
> spend all your money on
> Chocolates, Cokes, filtered smokes, fancy
> clothes, and picture shows,
>
> And then you'll look back and find that Cokes
> and smokes have gone to pot,
> And your bankbook will show that your cash is
> shot.
>
> What's worse, you'll find yourself cooking
> out of thin pans and tin pans,
> Lead pans and bread pans—
> None of which look alike or cook alike.
>
> So everyone says, "Well, what can I do
> but buy some of those from you"—
> And most of them do,
> and I've got good news for you—
> You've got a chance too!
>
> If you think that's too much high pressure,
> You can even use your own pen to fill out this order.

This combination of humor and imagination, mixed with a lot of hard work, produced championship results.

One of the most creative and imaginative sales trainers in America was the late Ira Hayes, who served as head of Advertising and Promotion for the Speakers Bureau of National Cash Register (NCR) before he took early retirement in 1980 to form his own company. While Ira was with NCR, he did public seminars all over America and, needless to say, his competitors were often in attendance. This didn't bother Ira or NCR, because they felt that when you sold *professionally* you were not giving up a piece of *your*

pie. You were increasing the size of the pie so that you (in this case Ira and NCR) were still going to get more pie.

Ira also smiled and explained that sometimes he had trouble getting his own people to use the techniques, so he wasn't worried about his competitors hearing his ideas.

The Prospect Who Won't Change Their Mind

Sales trainer Howard Bonnell, formerly the management training director for World Book Encyclopedia and currently a sales consultant and trainer for many different companies, shared this with me. One day Howard was working with a World Book representative. Howard made the presentation, and at the conclusion the prospect said, "Well, Mr. Bonnell, let me tell you something. We want the set of books, we need them, and our children can get a lot of benefit from them. However, when we married fifteen years ago, I made a flat statement that I was never going to buy anything on credit except our house, and in fifteen years I have never gone back on my word."

All of us have seen people like that, so broke that if it didn't cost but fifty cents to go around the world they couldn't get out of sight, but they pay cash for everything. In this particular case the prospect wasn't quite that broke, but his pride was at stake and Howard Bonnell, as persuasive as he is, was not about to get that guy to change his mind. There was no way. He'd made the statement and he was dogmatic: "I said I wasn't going to buy on credit and I'm not!" If Howard had tried to sell him by using every sales technique known to man, he would have done nothing but back up in the process. As I mentioned earlier, it is virtually impossible to get a person to change their mind.

The "Corner" Close

What Howard had to do was get this man out of the corner and let him be free to go ahead and make a *new* decision. Here's how he did it: He looked at the prospect and said, "Mr. Prospect, let me ask you a question. If I can show you how to get this set of World Book right now, without paying cash,

which you've said you don't have, and without going back on your word, would you be interested?" The old boy asked, "How can you do that?" Howard didn't let him off the hook. He repeated. "Here's the question. If I can show you how to get this set of World Book today without paying cash, without getting it on credit, and without going back on *your* word, would you be interested?" The prospect said, "Yeah, how could I do that?" Howard: "It's really very simple."

Then he turned to the wife, looked at her, and said, "Mrs. Prospect, as I understand it, *you* did not make a commitment like your husband, did you?" She said, "No, I didn't." Then Howard turned to the husband and said, "Mr. Prospect, will it be all right if I talk with your wife about solving your problem for you and your son?" The old boy said, "Well, whatever you can work out with her is perfectly all right with me. Just go ahead."

Actually, the man was delighted he'd been taken off the hook and was able to get out of the corner. Howard enabled him to save face, which was critical. The man recognized the need for the encyclopedias, wanted to buy them, but would *not* have gotten them had Howard not been astute enough to save face for him and make it easy for him to buy. Much of the sales process is simply figuring out a way for the prospect to buy what you sell.

Howard astutely points out that the prospect's objection was emotional and illogical, but *he* wasn't going to buy—period. In order to make the sale, Howard had to appeal to his *emotions*. *Logically*, whether the man or the wife signed the agreement didn't matter as far as responsibility was concerned. *Emotionally*, the prospect would comfortably buy because his wife was signing so his cash record was intact. Note: His reason for buying was for the children's benefit. His excuse: His wife did it—not him.

Many of these closes and procedures involve the use of your imagination, letting your prospect see *logically and emotionally* what you're offering and urging them to make a new decision. I emphasize there is seldom a sales call or interview in which everything comes off according to "Hoyle," or exactly as projected on the drawing board. However, if you've got the guidelines and if you build reserves of knowledge which are instantly at your disposal, your imagination is free to work. As a result, you'll make more sales, and you'll build your career faster and more successfully.

Imagination in Time Usage

One of the most time-conscious, dedicated, and imaginative salesmen I have ever known is Hal Krause. When Hal founded American Salesmasters he had two major objectives. His first goal was to make the company the biggest and best sales training organization of its kind in the world. Not only did Hal achieve this objective, but along the way American Salesmasters was awarded the prestigious President's E. Award, which is awarded to a handful of America's top export companies.

As an aside, I might reinforce what I said in chapter 13 about the sales profession and free enterprise. As a young man of modest circumstances, Hal not only worked his way through college selling hope chest items to single girls but was also able to accumulate a substantial nest egg in the process. He used this capital to launch a successful business career founded on the principles which made America great. He truly is a wholesome personification of the American dream, and *he got his start in the sales profession.*

Hal's second goal was to sell his company and "retire" before he was forty. Three weeks before his fortieth birthday he reached his second goal. In "retirement" Hal has served as the Republican National Committeeman for the Republican party in Colorado, looked after some diverse business interests, and conducted financial seminars around the world. Hal does many things successfully because of hard work, imagination, and time management.

The "Time Utilization" Close

Example: While serving as president of American Salesmasters, Hal once had about an hour's stop between flights in a large city.

The home office for a major insurance company was close to the airport, so Hal took a taxi on the chance he could see a decision maker at the company. He gave the receptionist his card and said, "I'm between planes and I do not have an appointment, but if at all possible I would like to see the president."

This company utilized a speaker system built into the telephone, so the receptionist, with Hal listening, called the president and told him that Mr. Hal Krause of American Salesmasters would like to see him. Instead of

answering back on the telephone so he could not be heard, the president, slightly annoyed, responded on the speaker system and said, “Tell the young man I am busy and I work only by appointment.”

Hal and the receptionist heard the response and the receptionist was a little embarrassed. Hal just smiled and asked the receptionist to press the proper button so he could respond directly to the president’s comments. She complied with the request and Hal said, “Sir, my name is Hal Krause. May I ask you just one question?” Insurance company president: “Yes.” Hal: “In your training program, do you train your salespeople, when they have an hour between appointments, to utilize that time by making cold calls?” Insurance company president (after a long pause): “Mr. Krause, because you’ve asked the right question, I want to talk with you. Come on in.”

Hal utilized the time effectively. He laid the groundwork on this call, and a follow-up call produced a substantial order.

The “Question” Close

Effective sales procedures work everywhere. Mike Bhag, who worked with the sponsor of the Dale Carnegie courses in England, listened to the Hal Krause example. Here in his own words is how Mike put the information to work for himself:

> It was 1:40 on a hot Friday afternoon. I had just driven into town for a two o’clock appointment. I had twenty minutes to kill; since there are 1,440 minutes in a day, I decided to turn dead time into quality time and make a cold call. I spotted a large car showroom, gave myself a pep talk, and walked in.
>
> I asked the salesman, “Is the boss in?” He replied, “No.” Not to be deterred I said, “If he were in, where would he be?” “Across the street,” he answered. I walked onto the premises across the street, into the reception area, and said to the receptionist, “The boss isn’t in, is he?”
>
> “Oh, yes he is; he’s in his office in front of you.” The boss was in a meeting with his sales manager and overheard the receptionist. He looked my way. I walked in and said, “As managing director of this company, you’re probably always looking for ways to increase sales, aren’t you?”
>
> I did not get a chance to continue as he said, “Young man, can’t you see I’m very busy? It’s Friday afternoon! It’s lunchtime! Tell me, I’m curious, what makes you call at this particular time?”
>
> I confidently looked him straight in the eye and said, “Do you really want to know?” “Yes, I’m curious,” he replied. “Well,” I said, “I’ve just driven in from Reading. My next appointment is at 2:00 p.m. I’ve got twenty minutes to kill, so I thought I would turn dead time into productive time and make a cold call.” Then I lowered my voice and asked slowly, “Isn’t that what you teach your salesmen to do?”

At that his mouth dropped. He looked at his sales manager in amazement and awe, smiled, and said to me warmly, “Sit down, young man, sit down!” By the time I finished I had made a large sale involving sales-and-management training for his company.

Fantastic, Mike! *Excellent use of your time and your imagination, not to mention the fact that you tailored the script to fit your situation and asked six questions to get into an actual interview.*

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Using Word Pictures to Sell

Most—no, change that to *all*—ambitiously aggressive salespeople are always on the lookout for the magic word, the key phrase, or the new technique that will give them a persuasive edge and leave the prospect powerless to resist. Fortunately, no such "weapon" exists, *but* there are many words, phrases, and techniques you can learn and use which will enable you to present your offer in a more attractive light. The result is a more persuasive presentation which will enable you to persuade more—but not all—of your prospects to take action.

To some hard-liners this will sound like heresy, but I am convinced the moment you recognize that not everyone could or should buy your product or services, you will sell to more of those who *can* and *should* buy.

You *do not* enhance your reputation or build your career by overloading your prospects or by browbeating a nonprospect into buying something they really don't want, don't need, or can't afford. Once you clearly understand that basic premise, it will be easier for you to forgive yourself for missing a sale you thought you should have made. This frees your mind to give maximum effort to the next sales interview.

Careful. This involves some common sense and mature judgment. Otherwise you might rationalize that everyone who does not buy really isn't a prospect. From a sales career point of view, *that* would be a fatal mistake.

Now let's look at some words and procedures which the legitimate salesperson, selling a legitimate product at a fair price, can use to persuade legitimate prospects to take action in their own best interests.

Twenty-Four Words That Sell

My friend, sales trainer Thom Norman from Scottsdale, Arizona, was one of the most comprehensive sales trainers in America. Thom's specialty was the telephone, but he did considerable work and research in other fields. For example, he identified twenty-four words that sell and twenty-four words that "unsell." Thom agreed to share these words with us. I encourage you to memorize *and* learn them by getting a good dictionary and finding out *exactly* what each one means. From the list I promise you at least a half-dozen pleasant learning surprises when you pursue them in a dictionary.

The first word that sells is your prospect's name. I think everyone recognizes this as being true. Their name is the sweetest sound of them all. You should use it from time to time throughout your presentation. Here are the other twenty-three.

understand	proven	health	easy	guarantee	discovery
money	safety	save	new	love	profit
right	results	truth	comfort	proud	vital
deserve	happy	trust	value	fun	

Note: Yale University has added five words to Thom's twenty-four selling words: YOU, SECURITY, ADVANTAGE, POSITIVE, and BENEFITS.

Thom also has researched and come up with twenty-four words that "unsell," and here they are:

deal	cost	pay	contract	sign	try
lose	hurt	buy	death	bad	sell
sold	price	decision	hard	difficult	worry
obligation	liable	fail	liability	failure	loss

I encourage you to give these words the same dictionary treatment.

Obviously, there are many additional words that are soothing to the prospect's ears, and others which leave the prospect in neutral or even turn him off. I share Billie Engman's dislike for the word *pitch*, and most people

prefer *home* to *house* and *a fine automobile* instead of *a nice car.* It's easier to get a prospect to OK an *agreement* than it is to sign a *contract,* and more people prefer to *invest* instead of *buy.* They find it easier to make a *deposit* each month than to make a *payment.*

Words and phrases which paint word pictures can sell effectively for you and your company. For example, in North Carolina the highway patrol took a positive and imaginative approach with their roadside signs that proclaimed, "North Carolina uses radar to protect you from speeding drivers." The picture is clear, isn't it?

Watch Those Words

One reason I encouraged you to record your sales presentation (see chapter 5) is to help you recognize the positive *and* the negative aspects of the words, phrases, and word patterns you use. You know, one of the things, you know, that will drive a prospect up the wall, you know, is the use of *you know.* It's hard to imagine, you know, but some people actually, you know, use the words *you know* as many times in conversation as I have used them in these last two sentences. Nothing is more distracting to a prospect than hearing *you know* in every sentence. And you know that's true, don't you?

Another negative and distracting phrase is the constant use of "Do you understand what I mean?" or "You know what I mean?" Too many of those little goodies and your prospect will start *counting* the number of times you use them. Since they can't count and concentrate at the same time, your persuasiveness will be adversely affected.

Of all the negative words, easily the most negative and destructive are the obscene, vulgar, and profane ones. And a sure way of committing sales suicide with *many* prospects (that would certainly include me) is to take God's name in vain. Question: Have *you* ever heard of anyone buying anything from a salesperson *because* they used gutter language or took God's name in vain? Fact: Many people *don't* buy because of the use of those objectionable words. Question: Since the prospect *doesn't* buy because of those profane or vulgar words and *might not* buy because of them, doesn't it make sense to leave them out?

In the world of selling you've got to understand two things if you expect to become a real sales professional. First, the mind thinks in pictures. For

example, if I say “car,” you do not think “c-a-r.” In your mind’s eye you see a car, and it is probably a beautiful car. If I say “girl,” you do not think “g-i-r-l,” but fellows, in your mind’s eye you will see a beautiful girl. If I say “house,” as a reader or a listener you would not think “h-o-u-s-e,” but rather you would, in your mind’s eye, see a house. If I say “home,” you do not think “h-o-m-e,” but you see a home with a *family* in it, whereas the house you saw in your mind just two seconds ago was empty. The master salesperson takes a verbal paintbrush and instinctively uses *full* words like *home* instead of empty words like *house.*

Number two, if you’re going to sell more of your goods, products, services, or ideas, you’ve got to learn how to take the verbal paintbrush and paint your prospects right into the picture. You’ve got to put your prospect in the car and show them enjoying the luxury, comfort, or economy of driving your particular car. You’ve got to paint the picture of satisfaction and gratification of them grilling the steak on their grill on a beautiful spring, summer, or fall evening in the backyard of the home you are showing them. The picture must be (a) in color and (b) in the present tense.

The “Picture” Close

The *New York Times* printed a story of how a New Jersey housewife’s feeling for her home, combined with her sense of what makes good advertising copy, in one day sold a home that five brokers had been carrying for three months. Mr. and Mrs. Lowe decided to sell their two-bedroom home to buy a larger one since space was becoming a problem. The brokers ran typical, standard ads like “Cozy six-room home, ranch style with fireplace, garage, tile baths, all hot water heat, convenient to Rutgers campus, stadium, golf courses, and primary school.” Those are facts, but *people do not buy facts or even benefits unless they can see those benefits translated to their own personal use.*

After three months Mrs. Lowe ran an ad herself. She was anxious to get something done and believed she could sell her *home*. Here’s the way the ad ran:

We’ll Miss Our Home

> We've been happy in it but two bedrooms are not enough for us, so we must move. If you like to be cozy by a fire while you admire autumn woods through wide windows, protected from the street, if you like a shady yard in summer, a clear view of winter sunsets, and quiet enough to hear frogs in spring, but city utilities and conveniences, you might like to buy our home. We hope so. We don't want it to be empty and alone at Christmas.

Out of the six responses the next day, one person bought the home.

Now look back at those word pictures. Block off the first sentence and you can *see* a happy family crowded together in a nice home which is just too small for the *current* owners. You immediately see that there is nothing wrong with the *home.* The problem is *too many* occupants. *IMPORTANT:* Slow down and take the rest of that ad on a phrase-by-phrase basis. There are *seven* additional pictures, a total of eight pictures in the eighty-six words in the body of the ad. Now tell yourself the truth. Did you see the *other* picture in the heading—or was it so obvious you missed it? That's the reason I keep telling you to *study* this book a number of times.

This ad or "sales talk" painted a beautiful picture of the features *and* benefits the Lowes had enjoyed as owners, but it did even more. It promised the new owners they would inherit the same beauty, benefits, and enjoyment. It painted a beautiful picture of happiness, contentment, and security which the new owners would inherit.

You probably noticed that Mrs. Lowe advertised her "home," not her "house." The difference between a house and a home is *love.* The new owners could undoubtedly sense the love the Lowes had for their "home." They didn't want to *buy* a house to occupy. They wanted to *invest* in a home to *live* in. Yes, words do make a difference, don't they?

Ideally, word pictures should either paint beauty, luxury, love, satisfaction, enjoyment, success, performance, or the features painted by Mrs. Lowe. Obviously, most pictures will paint a combination of features and benefits, but *all* word pictures *must* paint the prospect *in* the picture for maximum effectiveness. Almost without exception, every product or service can be sold by painting word pictures, especially if the pictures are in the *present* tense. As I've previously stated, we *think* in pictures and we *buy* pictures if we are painted into the picture as satisfied customers.

Kevin's Xponential Insight #11: Let Your Story Paint a Picture

I fly a lot, and on every flight, the attendants will all demonstrate the same thing. If cabin pressure drops unexpectedly, oxygen masks will drop down. They stress the

importance of putting my own mask on first before I help others. Why? I need to be breathing clearly and thinking clearly in order to help someone else. The same is true when engaging with prospects. Before you can help them get clarity on the best path for themselves, you need to have clarity about your own story first. Without clarity, you'd get confusion. When people are confused, they don't act.

How do you get clear on your own story? First, know your story. Most people never stop to reflect on or realize the power of their own story. The truth is you have a wealth of life experiences, both successes and failures, that you can draw from to make your story stand out, and everyone loves a good story. Take the time to listen to your previous experiences, especially any that might align with your potential customers or audience. For example, are you trying to sell services to entrepreneurs? Your own failure in business can be told in a way that illustrates the need for your services. Are you wanting to build an audience that helps families? Start by sharing your own family struggles. Now, don't neglect successes. Ultimately people want to see solutions and have confidence that you can help them there. But be vulnerable, be candid, and then show them how they can take a success path to solve the problems just like you did.

Step two. Connect your story with your target audience. Once you've fleshed out your own story, think about how your story connects with that of your target audience. For example, I once heard of a life insurance agent who lost his own father unexpectedly without any life insurance in place. The loss was emotionally and financially devastating to the family. This agent told that story in a very authentic and sincere way when illustrating the need for his prospects to secure their family's own future well-being.

That's why I've told parts of my own story—because I want you to see that I've dealt with a lot of the same challenges you face now. When you connect your own success story, you give hope, and hope captivates people and draws in potential audience members or sales prospects. Your connection to their story should provide both empathy with their struggle and credibility that you know a better way.

Once you know your story and connect your story, it's time to tell your story well. Tell it in a vivid way using words and details that really make it come alive for them. Focus on the why behind why you do what you do and don't immediately jump into the details of what. Let them know you feel their pain points. Wherever possible, communicate how you have "been there and done that," and find solutions on the other side by using your own idea, product, or service. This step will require some intentional thought, maybe even some focus groups, or simply trial and error as you engage with people in your network. But by paying attention to how you tell your story, you can open the door with prospects or potential audience members.

Know your story. Connect your story. Tell your story. The process is essentially the same whether you're engaging online via webinars and sales presentations, on

phone calls, or over lunch, because people are people, and your story can be powerful in every setting.

Picture-Painting Selling Is Good Postselling

One of the most effective users of word pictures was the late Fred Herman. Here is a story told by Fred as he demonstrated the use of word pictures in front of live audiences. I had the privilege of seeing Fred do this on several occasions, and his widow, Kay Herman, supplied me with a recording of his presentation to refresh my memory. Since I had the advantage of both seeing and hearing the presentation, I'll set the stage as we go, but the words will be Fred Herman's.

Fred (to audience): "People do not buy products or services—they buy pictures of the end result of using the product or service. Let me give you an example. I need somebody who has a boy about five or six years old to come up and help me."

Fred to participant in audience holding up hand: "How old is your oldest boy?" Participant: "Twelve." Fred: "Twelve. OK, that's all right, come on up here. What's his name?" Participant: "Michael." Fred: "And your name is . . . ?" Participant: "Bob." Fred: "Bob, I appreciate your coming up here. Bob, we came out here not to talk about insurance or investments but to talk about how to get Michael a college education. You'd spend a few minutes on that, wouldn't you?" Bob: "Sure can."

In this drama Fred explains that the insurance representative describes the insurance program and its benefits. Then he says to the audience: "So we've talked about a program. We've provided the solution. We worked out some sort of a program so there'd be cash value at a certain time, but I'd say, 'Bob, as we've been working together here it's become completely apparent to me that one of the drives inside of you is that Michael will have the tools and equipment so that he can meet life and whip it, is that right?'" Bob: "That's correct." Fred: "Well, this program we've worked out will take care of this regardless of what might happen. Here's what does happen.

"It's about maybe eight or nine years from now. An invitation comes through the mail from the college of Michael's choice. You and your wife go to the graduation ceremonies. You enter the hall, and there's a

tremendous babble of voices, a feeling of human warmth; it all hushes down as you hear the graduation processional, hear the swish of robes as you see those little tassels bouncing on the hats. You notice your wife's face. Big smile on it, but there's just the suggestion of a tear in the corner of her eye. And you kind of grab her hand and she holds your hand; you're completely enthralled in the culmination of years of hoping and planning and dreaming.

"It's over now. You watch Mike go across and get his diploma. He's walking up the aisle, he's looking for you and your wife; he spies you. There's a big smile on his face. You feel the warmth of his handclasp, you feel his arm around your shoulder, and he says, 'Gee, Dad, I'll never forget you for this.' This is what you want, isn't it, Bob?" Bob: "Yeah."

Corny? Only if you, the salesperson, don't really feel the emotion the parents felt. I might also add that this procedure is good postselling, too. It helps to ensure the sale because you are selling the results of the sale. I might also point out that the parents are getting *some* now benefits in peace of mind by *knowing* their son's college education is secure.

Almost regardless of what you sell, you can and should paint a picture the prospect can see and feel. Since many of the benefits, in this case, are delayed for years, it is important that an emotional picture of those delayed benefits be burned indelibly into that prospect's mind. This greatly reduces the possibility of cancellation.

The impact of picture selling is vividly clear and explains why Charles Osgood of CBS News was moved to say, "A picture is a pitiful thing next to words and imagination." To make certain you didn't miss it, I must also point out that the dialogue also contained six questions. Good selling and good closing by good salespeople will always include several facets of the sales presentation.

When Fred was making this presentation, life insurance with cash value was very popular and practical for many young parents. Today we deal with different products (term insurance in combination with mutual funds, common stock, the money market, CDs, etc.), but the technique and procedure are the same. You adapt the procedures to fit your product or service.

As sales trainer John Hammond points out, when a person makes a significant purchase of any kind, they generally make that purchase only *after* they have gone through the picture-painting process in their own

mind. As a professional you need to help the prospect with the picture-painting process.

The "Preparation" Close

A good friend of mine, the late Dr. Emol Fails, a former professor at North Carolina State University, did a considerable amount of work with many chambers of commerce. He convinced them they needed to have sales clinics for the retail salespeople in stores in their area to teach them how to capitalize on the sales opportunities that many, if not most of them, were missing.

To prove the point that they needed training, Dr. Fails took his wallet, tied it to the back of his car, and dragged it around town for several days until it was in tatters. Then he put his credit cards, money, and driver's license in it. Next, he would go into a men's store and buy a necktie, which as a general rule is located reasonably close to a display of wallets. He would take his wallet out of his pocket and "accidentally" drop it. Money, credit cards, and wallet would scatter all over the floor.

In one small town the same thing happened in five different stores. The clerks would always help him pick up the pieces. *Sometimes they would look down their noses at that disgraceful thing he called a wallet, but not a single one suggested that in addition to the necktie a new wallet might also be considered.*

The picture Dr. Fails painted was crystal clear. The need for sales training was acute. The benefits to the people, the merchants, and the chamber of commerce could easily be visualized by the chamber official.

It is my firm conviction that by using your imagination you can paint effective pictures for your prospects. In Dr. Fails's case, the preparation (dragging the wallet behind his car and calling on the five stores) for the sales call on the chamber official took ten times as long as the actual call. This supports Abraham Lincoln's statement, "If I had nine hours to cut down a tree, I would spend six hours sharpening my axe." Selling is not easy, but proper preparation makes it *easier* and far more rewarding.

Incidentally, this is true in *all* fields of endeavor. The trial attorney spends hundreds of hours in study, investigation, and preparation for every

hour he spends in the courtroom. Ditto for the surgeon, the professional athlete, *and* the professional salesperson. The great racehorse Nashua won over $1 million in less than one hour of racing, but he spent hundreds of hours in training to know how to perform in all kinds of weather and under all track conditions. With proper preparation and by being in great physical and mental shape to run the proper pace, accelerate when needed, and go all out when necessary, he was able to take advantage of every opportunity.

I think you get the picture! When you train in the art of professional closing in relationship to the time a professional football team prepares for Sunday or a boxer prepares for a match (not to mention the championship), you'll begin to realize a tremendous jump in your closing ratio on the regular calls and a good boost in the close ones—which most people in sales have always missed.

The "Fear" Close

Fred Herman used one of the fastest and most effective word pictures I've ever heard of. He conducted a training program for a major oil company and trained their service station attendants. (This was years ago when service stations gave service!) Fred's primary purpose was to teach the attendants how to sell more oil. (In those days, help was plentiful and service stations were desperately trying to sell more oil.)

When the attendant lifted the hood and checked the oil, Fred taught him to go to the driver and say, "You need five quarts." Fred properly identified this as fear motivation. It paints a vivid word picture, doesn't it? It's easy to visualize the fear in the prospect's mind, because the instant the attendant said, "You need five quarts," the car owner could visualize a serious engine problem. Most people expect the worst, and the thought of his car burning those five quarts of oil was pretty frightening.

Fred said the car owner would come unglued and bound out of that driver's seat in a hurry! "What do you mean, I need five quarts?" Then the attendant calmly said, "Your oil is awfully dirty and should be changed before it damages your motor. It won't take but a minute and you'll be on your way." (That last sentence is another word picture, isn't it?)

You Sell What It Does

You need to paint the picture of your prospect using and enjoying the goods or services you sell. When you become completely aware of this process and the benefits that go with it, you will work at doing it until picture selling becomes second nature for you.

Make yourself a mental note to check the word pictures I paint for you throughout the remainder of this book. Remind yourself in your second and subsequent readings of *Secrets of Closing the Sale* to look for the word pictures. Incidentally, I remind you again that you will glean more ideas, make more notes, and mark the book more on your second reading than you will on your first and still more on your third than on your second.

Throughout the book the picture painted is that of satisfaction and gratification. The reason is simple. *You don't sell what the product is—you always sell what the product does.* Example: Each year over five million quarter-inch drills are sold, yet it's safe to say that nobody wants a quarter-inch drill. They want a quarter-inch hole.

Each year billions of dollars worth of cosmetics are sold, yet it's safe to say that nobody wants lipstick, eye shadow, blush, etc. What they want is a more attractive appearance. They want to smell good and to be glamorous and desirable to members of the opposite sex.

You don't sell what the product is— you sell what it does.

Watch the ads on television and you'll hear word pictures and see the actual picture of the users of the product enjoying the benefits of the product.

Kevin's Xponential Insight #12: The Sale after the Sale

As a teen, I sold a product called Baby Tenda. It was a high chair that solved huge safety issues—chairs tipping, children falling, getting tangled in nearby cords, etc.—by suspending babies securely in midair.

Bottom line: It was a great product, but very expensive, probably the equivalent of $800 today. So, I would make the sale and return to my office all excited. But since we had a three-day cancellation policy, 30 percent of those buyers would cancel the product. It was perplexing. But then my boss taught me a closing

technique that eliminated 100 percent of the cancellations—The Post Close. I sold them twice.

Before I left a house with a check in hand, I turned and asked, "Before I leave, do you have any unanswered questions about your new product? Because if you think you may call your parents or change your mind about this purchase after I leave, I'd rather just give you back your check right now." And I handed the check back to them. I then answered any remaining questions and resold them again. This time when they handed me the check again, they insisted they would not be changing their minds, no matter what opinions they got afterward.

By asking and answering potential issues *before* I even left, I was able to address them all and drop my return rate to zero. After learning that technique, I never had anybody else cancel. The Post Close gives you a chance to sell again, by summarizing all benefits, and answering *any* final questions—and future objections of people not even in the room.

The "Postselling" Close

Thom Norman painted word pictures with a letter. He trained salespeople to write the customer after the sale was made. This is postselling, which is often overlooked in sales training. Its importance should be obvious, because once you've made the sale, you need to keep it sold.

Thom encouraged his clients to do the same thing he did for many years when he was in the field of direct selling. He urged salespeople to write a letter the evening, or no later than the day after, the sale has been made, whether the sale was made in a home or office.

Thom insisted that the letter be handwritten. It's all right to use company stationery, but it is very important that you hand address the envelope and put a postage stamp on it, since it is more personal than a postage meter.

The letter says, "A personal note to thank you for your courtesy and the trust and confidence you placed in me yesterday [or today, whichever day you are writing the letter]. I very much enjoyed visiting with you and your family. I am proud that you are now using our product or service and know that you will benefit and be pleased with the results. I shall be in touch with you in the future to see if I can be of any additional service. In the meantime, if you should need or want assistance of any kind, please feel free to contact me."

This letter paints a lot of pictures and gives the new customer some sincere “strokes” and assurance that they did the right thing:

Thank you for your courtesy.
I enjoyed visiting.
I am proud of you.
You will benefit and be pleased.
I shall be in touch if you need or want assistance.

Kevin’s Xponential Insight #13: Postselling Close

I have a good friend and mentor named James who taught me to connect after every speaking engagement with the person who booked me to send a note, a thank-you, or a gift of some kind. He always sent a picture of himself with that person in a framed print or a personalized gift, if he knew their likes and dislikes. He would always follow up with *something* to leave them feeling good about the experience.

As a result, he got booked year after year by that agent. That follow-up after the sale kept him at the front of people’s minds and in a favorable light. James was all about service with a smile and his kind of keep-in-touch type of thing. I try to do the same and call it the Postselling Close. As Zig often said, “You make the sale. But if you want a lifetime relationship, then you’ve got to stay in touch and continue to support and be there for that client.” The sale isn’t done after the transaction. In many ways, it may be just beginning.

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Picture Selling for Bigger, Permanent Sales

The "Repetition" Close

If your presentation or demonstration is fifteen minutes or longer, you need to build in repetitive benefit phrases which suggest that those who buy from you enjoy certain benefits which those who don't buy from you can never enjoy. These phrases should have continuity: "This tightly seals all escapes"; "This keeps the heat out and the cold in"; "Electricity savings are substantial"; "The money you save is yours, not the utility company's"; "Invest your savings in your future."

Every Good Salesperson Paints Pictures

Good mechanics and conscientious doctors all do exactly the same thing. The doctor says, "It's not cancer—yet." The mechanic says, "No, I don't think you need a major overhaul—yet." The word *yet* paints a picture of fear in the prospect's mind.

Question: Would you want a doctor who *wouldn't* put a little fear into your heart that if you didn't do something, that benign tumor might become cancerous? Would you want a mechanic who wouldn't let you know that if you didn't replace your brake pads fairly soon, you'd end up spending five times as much money?

Thinking as a salesperson/customer, what do you think about the salesperson who is not aggressively concerned enough about the customer to take a certain amount of risk in actively encouraging the prospect to

make one or two *more* purchases to increase the effectiveness or enjoyment of the purchases already made? *Motive* is the key word. If you encourage the prospect to buy more merchandise solely because you can earn more, you are a "peddler." If you encourage the prospect to buy more items for their benefit, you are a "professional," and both of you benefit.

When you paint that prospect into the picture and tie the companion selling to it, you're going to sell more merchandise—and cut down on the travel and shopping time of your customer. It is true—you can have everything in life you want if you will just help enough other people get what they want.

The "Menu" Close

One of the most liberal uses of picture-painting words I've ever seen is the menu for the Hyatt hotels. I'm looking at one from Indianapolis, Indiana, and the descriptive adjectives they use really paint beautiful pictures to "close" you on ordering not just this one food item but *more* different items. Their imagination certainly ran rampant on these. Here are a few samples.

The heading is "Sensuous Salads. California Painter's Palate. A colorful array of the season's freshest berries, bananas, melons, pineapples, and grapes surrounding separate scoops of frozen yogurt and cottage cheese on a palate of watermelon."

Or get a load of this one: "Spinach Supreme. A tumultuous arrangement of fresh spinach leaves mingled with enok mushrooms, crisp chips of bacon, and ripe tomato, with our superb hot honey bacon dressing."

And this one is not bad either: "For Protein Lovers. Mr. Chopped Sirloin conducts an orchestra of fresh vegetables, fruits, and eggs to an audience of shredded lettuce with an accompaniment of frozen yogurt and cottage cheese."

Here's another. "The Tivoli. A bountiful garden sandwich of fresh avocado sprouts, Swiss cheese, tomato, and head lettuce on honey wheat bread amidst a symphony of fresh, raw vegetables with our Esquire Sauce for dipping."

The Rusty Scupper doesn't do badly, either. Just look at the next twenty-eight words. "Crab and Cheddar. A feast worthy of King Neptune himself!

A generous helping of crab salad under melted cheddar cheese, all grilled and served open-face on sourdough bread."

This one is short and sweet, too. "Avocado, Shrimp, and Bacon. Tasting is believing! Tempting avocado and Pacific bay shrimp topped with Canadian bacon comes to you open-face on sourdough bread. French fries come along, too."

Yes, sir, those folks really are word merchants. They know how to throw the words around to describe their food, and since I've eaten at both these places on several different occasions, I'm here to tell you they deliver what they sell. It's good!

The "Oooh and Aaah" Close

During the years I worked with Bernie Lofchick and World Wide Distributors, I was presented with many unusual opportunities. Never will I forget when World Wide started selling fine Bavarian china. Bernie had gone to Germany and negotiated an agreement with a manufacturer of beautiful Bavarian china. He was permitted to select his own patterns and even had some specifically created for his company. This presented a rather unique opportunity for the use of word pictures and imagination.

In selling hope chest items to single girls, the "romance" or "story" associated with any pattern presented was especially important. Everything was in place and all set for all of the patterns except one, which was a unique and beautiful pattern; but without the proper presentation Bernie felt it would not be accepted in the marketplace.

At the eleventh hour, the night before the convention when the new china was to be presented, Bernie and I finally came up with an idea. On the day of the convention we presented the china to the sales audience and they were wildly enthusiastic about the quality and beauty, as well as the finer points involved with a truly quality product. One by one the different patterns were presented, and since a matter of taste is always involved, the various salespeople responded to the different patterns according to their own taste preferences.

When the magic moment arrived for this one pattern to be presented, I paused, looked at the audience, smiled, and said, "Now, folks, just before

you take this pattern from your sample case and show it to the girl, here's what you want to say. Look at her, smile broadly, and say, 'Now, Mary, this next pattern is what we call the "Oooh and Aaah" pattern. We call it that because when a girl sees this one she either says "Oooh" or "Aaah," which is exactly the same thing your dinner guests will be saying for the rest of your life as you use this pattern.'"

At that point I removed the dinner plate from the sample case, held it up in front of the audience, and sure enough—without exception—everyone there said either "Oooh" or "Aaah." This particular pattern became a runaway best-seller and World Wide Distributors sold more than twice as much of this pattern as they did any of the other patterns. This might have happened in any event, but Bernie Lofchick is absolutely convinced that the introduction of the pattern to the entire sales force with that little touch is what made the difference.

You Can Use It This Way

Again, I urge you to adapt this approach to your own situation. For example, if you're in a ladies' apparel shop and your prospect has been having difficulty choosing the right dress or outfit, I encourage you to have an "Oooh" or "Aaah" outfit. If you are perceptive, by the time you have spent a few minutes with your prospect, you will have a feel for what she really likes. Most of the finer shops have those unique outfits that were "made for" the particular shopper. However, many times the prospect is indecisive and vacillates between choosing one outfit over another. At the right moment—and that definitely is not the first three or four outfits you show—when your prospect shows she is a little confused as to what to purchase, you say to her, "I just remembered something which I believe is what you're looking for. As a matter of fact, let me tell you that when your husband [or boyfriend] sees you in this, he's probably going to say either 'Oooh' or 'Aaah.'" Then smilingly say, "So in reality this is our 'Oooh' or 'Aaah' outfit." Obviously, this approach will fit some prospects better than others.

The same basic approach can be used when you have a particularly gorgeous view in a home you're showing or when you're selling a fine automobile with a unique appearance. This approach would also be

applicable in the sale of fine jewelry, inspiring paintings, beautiful furniture, or any number of other items which we all merchandise. You could even expand it to a set of golf clubs. The salesperson, in explaining the clubs, can smilingly say to the prospect, “When you hit this driver off the tee, the rest of the foursome will probably say ‘Oooh’ or ‘Aaah.’”

Warm, descriptive words paint pictures, and those pictures and sounds do have a substantial impact on the buyer’s decision whether or not to buy. Yes, words do make a difference, so you, too, need to be a “word merchant.” You must learn to use them in an effective picture-painting process in order to utilize the potential you have and reach your peak as a sales professional.

PART 5

The Nuts and Bolts of Selling

Objectives

To sell you on the benefits of objections and teach you how to cash in on them in the marketplace.
To teach you how to identify the different kinds of prospects and how to deal with them as individuals.
To demonstrate the question-asking technique and give you specific questions to use under sales circumstances.
To encourage you to be a little bold—or even audacious—in the sales process under *some* circumstances.

Closes and/or Procedures

The “Assumptive” Close
The “Trial” Close
The “Four Question” Close
The “Talking Pad” Close
The “Safety Valve” or “Punt and Pray” Close
The “Alternate of Choice” Close Revisited
The “Wheeler Which” Close
The “Obligation” Close
The “Similar Product” Close
The “Right Experience” Close

The “Deserve It” Close
The “Reason-Excuse” Close
The “Choice” Close
The “Tie Down” Close Revisited
The “Permanent Customer” Close
The “Disclosure” Close
The “Minor Decision” Close
The “Tennis Racket” Close
The “Ben Franklin” Close
The “Hat in Hand” Close
The “Mother” Close
The “Pressure Permission” Close

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Objections—the Key to Closing the Sale

The very word *objection* strikes fear in the hearts of insecure and/or beginning salespeople. In reality it should create excitement, because as I will repeat a little later, the indication of an objection is an expression of interest, and that's the first thing a salesperson should be looking for.

There are as many different kinds of objections as there are kinds of prospects, so there are many approaches and variations in the way you handle each one of them. The subject is both broad and deep and is one of the most important covered in this book. I urge you to combine and adapt this information with your own company materials and applications, as well as explore the subject with sales leaders in your own industry.

Kevin's Xponential Insight #14: Welcome the Word No

Hearing the word *no* is a good thing in sales. When most people hear a no they assume it is final. But it actually means the prospect just doesn't have enough information to make the right decision to purchase whatever it is you're selling. As Zig said, you've got to get the value to outweigh the price.

No actually isn't the worst answer someone can give. At least they made a decision—and decisions can change with new information. The worst answer that you can get in a sale is, "I don't know." In those instances, you don't learn the real reason behind why they won't buy. At the end of the day, you've got to get to this reason, and a no is your fastest path.

When you hear the word no, try to discover the objections and isolate them so that you can then address each objection. If we put a product on TV and get one thousand people to call—but only three hundred order, we call the seven hundred people who didn't order and find out what was it that made them call but not

order? With this information, we can preempt those objections in the presentation itself before they even happen in the buyer's head. It's a process and system, but not an exact science. As Zig said, "If they can say No that quickly, they can say Yes just as quickly once you elevate that value proposition."

Learn to like a quick no, then listen to discover the objections behind it. Isolate them, address them with added value, and then close the sale.

Selling on Objections

I can state with considerable confidence that in most cases involving significant purchases, if you do not encounter objections from the prospect when you make your presentation, you do not have a prospect. When your prospect raises an objection, you ought to grin internally and think to yourself, *Oh, boy! I've got a live one today!* Just remember, if all the benefits and values of your product were obvious to the prospect, the salesperson (that's you) would not be necessary.

No Objections—No Prospect

For example, if you were to call on me selling scuba-diving equipment, I'd never raise an objection to the equipment. If you offered to sell me the complete outfit, guaranteed for fifty years for $9.95, I would never object because I have no interest.

If you were to try to sell me golf clubs, I might object by saying, "That shaft is too stiff [or not stiff enough]." A comment like that should bring a grin, because then you can say, "What you need is our new graphite shaft."

As far as objections are concerned, the question most frequently asked is, "When should you answer the objection?" Actually, there are four times to handle objections: (1) before they occur, (2) when they occur, (3) later, and (4) never. On the last one, however, let me explain something. The objection might seem frivolous or irrelevant to you, but if the prospect raises it the second time, you can rest assured it is important to them. You'd better handle the objection at that time or they will feel that you are

ignoring it, that you have either no interest in them or no answer to the objection.

As we deal with objections, let me emphatically state that I believe a highly motivated, skilled, professional salesperson can strip a prospect of all objections and make them look and feel utterly ridiculous if they don't buy. With this procedure a salesman can intimidate or "high pressure" some prospects into buying. I also believe that some salesmen can be so persuasive and charming they can "hypnotize" their prospects into buying products, goods, or services which are not needed or are grossly overpriced. However, no salesman is so hypnotic in their presentation that they can *keep* the prospect hypnotized and feeling good about the purchase until the product is delivered and paid for.

With this in mind, I'm convinced high-pressure or overpriced sales are easily the two worst things which can happen to a sales career. In either case the sale will probably be canceled, and neither approach will build customers, which is a *must* if you are going to build a sales career.

Along these lines, retired communications and time-management expert Dan Bellus says too many salespeople make the mistake of thinking the sales process is a "win" for the salesperson and a "loss" for the customer. With this attitude, Dan says, the salesperson gets the feeling they've got to "defeat" the other person. Dan then raises the question, "Can you honestly expect someone you just 'defeated' to buy something from you?"

The communication process demands that we approach the handling of objections in a convincing manner rather than a "defeating" manner. *Our objective is not to defeat but to convince and then persuade.* The point at which we "defeat" someone is the point at which we lose understanding and communication and, hence, the sale. He gives this example:

> A tourist was watching two Asians in Hong Kong who were really going at each other hot and heavy with language which almost turned the air blue! As they stood there, the observer asked the Asian guide, "What are they talking about?" The guide said, "They're having a discussion about ownership of a boat." The tourist said, "They're getting so wrought up, aren't they going to start fighting pretty soon?" The guide said, "No, they'll never start fighting because each one of them knows the man who strikes the first blow admits his ideas just gave out."

The same thing happens when we let a conversation develop into an argument. When we start arguing, our ideas have just given out. Communication—or in this case persuasion—no longer takes place.

To properly set the stage for dealing with objections, let me explain by way of analogy what my brother, who was one of the top sales trainers in the country, had to say. Judge explained that some people won't buy because the night train no longer runs from Buffalo to New York City. You might reasonably ask what the night train from Buffalo to New York City has to do with your prospect's not buying from you. Obviously, as Judge said, it has nothing to do with their not buying from you, but *if a prospect does not want to buy, one excuse is as good as another.*

Message: Give every call your very best. Make every effort to extend your goods, products, and services to the person you're dealing with. But if they do not buy, do not beat yourself to death as a result of it. Walk away and mentally prepare yourself to make the next sale on the next call. Remember that *you haven't failed on the sales call unless you let it negatively affect your attitude on your next sales call.*

Answer in Advance

First, let's look at the best time to answer the objection—which is before it occurs. Incidentally, if you are consistently getting the same objections after your presentation, it is a sure sign your presentation is in trouble. You need to analyze the presentation so you will be able to handle *most* objections in the body of the presentation. This approach enables you to answer the objection before it occurs, which means you are selling on the offense instead of defensively responding. This is far more positive and effective.

Here are a couple of examples of how to handle your objections in the body of the presentation before the prospect verbalizes them.

Years ago I sold a food machine. You probably saw these machines demonstrated on television, at the state fairs and food shows, or in local department stores. After demonstrating the machine for several months, I could flat make it talk! I'd put that food in the hopper and it came out about ninety miles an hour, sliced, diced, cubed, minced, waffled, shredded, chipped, curled, shoestrung, etc.

The group of prospects would sit or stand around "ooohing" and "aaahing" as the food came tumbling from the hopper in precise order. However, two objections would almost always arise. Generally one of the husbands would lean over and whisper to his wife in a voice you could only

hear about three blocks away, “Yeah, he can make that machine do tricks, but I’ll bet if you bought one *you* could never do that!” That was a standard objection, followed in short order by another when one of the ladies would comment, “It looks to me like you’d cut your hand on that thing, too!”

Make It Believable

These objections were so standard we knew we had to deal with them positively and in advance if we were going to sell the machines in quantity. Here is the way Harry Lemmons, the founder and president of The Saladmaster Corporation, taught me to handle this one. When I had quickly and easily cut three or four foods, I looked at the group and said, “Now, folks, many times those who attend these demonstrations watch me operate this food machine and ask, ‘Mr. Ziglar, if I bought one of those machines, could I do what you’re doing?’

“I’m going to be frank with you and say, *emphatically not*. There is no way you’re ever going to be as good at running this machine as I am. Now that’s not vanity, ladies, that’s just a fact. Let me explain. For several hours every day all I do is turn this crank, and just look at what’s happening [I was cutting food as I talked]. See how beautiful the food is and how easy the machine is to operate? To be fair, ladies, I make it look easy because I am a specialist with this machine.

The “Assumptive” Close

“Now ladies, when you get your machine [there’s my first assumptive buying suggestion], by necessity you are going to be a ‘general practitioner.’ While you are using your machine, you’re also going to have to be looking after the children, answering the telephone, running the vacuum cleaner, chasing the dog out of the house, and doing a hundred and one other things. All I’ve got to do is turn the crank, so I should be pretty good at it.”

Selling What the Product Does

They believed what I was saying, but at that point I had not sold a single machine, which was the purpose of the demonstration, so I continued my presentation. “If you won’t be as effective as I am with the machine, you probably wonder just how good you *will* be at saving time and money plus serving more attractive foods to your family. Here’s the answer.

“We could take this lady right here [and I’d always pick out a young lady close to the front], give her five minutes to read the instructions, and with the machine she will cut more food better and faster than any *three* other ladies in the room if I gave them the three sharpest knives in town. Chances are good they’ve been using knives all of their lives and our machine operator has never used the machine. The reason she will cut more food better and faster with the machine is simple. She has the *machine* that does the work. While she won’t be able to use this machine as well as I do, she will be able to do more than the three ladies with the knives because she has the machine that does the job, and that’s what you really want—isn’t it, ladies?” Nodding heads.

The “Trial” Close

That seemed to satisfy that objection pretty well. At this time I would cut two or three other foods, remove the first blade from the machine, and use my first trial close by saying, “Now, ladies, as you can plainly see, the machine has five blades. I’ve used only one blade to cut these first six foods, but let me ask you a question. If the machine had only this one blade [and now I lowered my voice and looked them in the eye], how many of you have already decided you sure would like to have your own food machine? Can I see your hands, please?” Almost without exception several of the ladies and even more of the men would nod their heads, hold up their hands, or verbally indicate they wanted a machine.

Humor Can Be Invaluable

At this point I would cut two or three more foods and deal with the second major unspoken objection by saying, “Many times I’ve had ladies ask me, ‘Mr. Ziglar, if I bought that machine, could I cut my hand with it?’” To this I would smilingly respond, “Yes, ma’am, you can, but we don’t recommend it.”

Many times you can do more with humor than you can by being dead serious. Then I would say, “Ladies, if you want to cut your hand with the machine, it’s very simple. All you have to do as you turn the crank is to insert your finger at the very back of the hopper so that it’s trapped between the blade and the hopper itself. If you are coordinated, you insert your finger as you turn the crank. This way the red comes out right over here [pointing to the front of the hopper and obviously smiling broadly]!

“Now, ladies, if you don’t want to cut your hand, *keep it out of the machine!* Any questions?” This approach apparently dealt with the hand-cutting objection beautifully because we seldom heard that particular objection again.

Cost Is Not the Determining Factor

On December 16, 1982, pitcher Floyd Bannister signed a five-year, $4.5 million contract with the Chicago White Sox. He chose the White Sox over the Atlanta Braves, who offered him a six-year contract worth $6.3 million. That’s $1.8 million *more* than the White Sox offered *and* the Braves had won their division pennant in 1982.

As a prospect, Floyd Bannister obviously considered some things more important than money. Here’s what Floyd’s wife, Jana, had to say:

> The Sox showed interest in Floyd as a person, not as a commodity. Until late in the negotiations, they were not really in the running, but we kept an open mind. When it came time to make a decision, it was important to us that [White Sox owner] Jerry Reinsdorf and [White Sox pitching coach] Dave Duncan flew to Arizona and took us out to dinner. It also was important that [White Sox manager] Tony LaRussa called Floyd several times, and a couple of White Sox players, Carlton Fisk and Tom Paciorek, also called.

Jerry Reinsdorf commented, “With Floyd we were dealing with somebody entirely different than the average player. The city and his teammates were just as important to him as money. I’d say fifty-fifty.”

Other factors in the decision were (1) a spacious home park more suitable for Bannister's fly-ball pitching, (2) an opportunity to remain in the American League, and (3) a city where he had friends and relatives.

Price *is* important but it is only *one* of many important factors. If you have a price advantage, you obviously utilize it to the maximum. If you don't have it, then do what the White Sox did in signing Floyd Bannister—capitalize on your other advantages. Of course, as Sherlock Holmes would say, "That's elementary, my dear Watson."

Maybe You've Got the Wrong Person

Caution: Many times when you've dealt with a series of objections and the prospect continues to bring up other ones, you should understand that maybe you're talking to the wrong person. It could be that this man or woman really is not the decision maker. He or she may have to confer with someone else, like the purchasing agent, the president, or a mate. Your prospect could be stalling and saving face by not admitting they can't make the decision.

To determine whether or not this is the case, this pleasant but direct approach used by John Hammond is most effective. "Mr. Prospect, I don't want to sound presumptuous, but I honestly believe that because of the versatility of our product and the nature of your need, our product is the answer to any questions which you might raise. But before we go any further, may I ask you a question?" If the prospect says yes, then say: "If I can answer your question to your satisfaction that this is the right product at the right time and at the right price, are you personally in a position to give me an order for the product today, and would you be willing to do so?"

Chances are excellent if it's handled properly and they cannot make the decision, you will be able to determine this and save yourself a great deal of time. If they acknowledge that they cannot make the decision, then you need to make an appointment—with their help—with the person who *can* make the decision.

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Objections Are Consistent—Objectors Aren't

In no particular order I will first identify the different kinds of prospects and then I will give some basic guidelines in one to five sentences as to how you can deal with them.

First, there is the antagonistic prospect, then the skeptical, the gullible, the egotistical, the know-it-all, the procrastinator, the hostile, the indecisive, the dominant "tough guy," the big spender, the conservative penny pincher, the critical prospect, the bargain hunter, the good-time Charlie, and the stone face. On the humorous side, you have the animal prospect who is going to "bear" it in mind; the insomniac prospect who is going to "sleep on it"; the musical prospect who will make a "note" of it; and the playful prospect who is just "feeling out the market."

Yes, there are many kinds of prospects and I will repeat part of this as I deal with the various ones. There are two things you really need to know about all of them.

First, all prospects want to be right and they want to be understood. Second, at the point of purchase all of them are afraid they're going to make a mistake, particularly if a significant amount of money is involved. Therefore, all prospects want reassurance that they are making the right decision.

Convince the Prospect. Let's also remember as we deal with the prospects what Dan Bellus says: "The objective is not to defeat the prospect but to convince him if he makes the purchase he's going to be happier and better off as a result."

Another thing to remember is this basic formula that Cavett Robert described: As objections are raised, regardless of the kind of prospect you

have, all the way from the gullible to the hostile, we first of all should act delighted about the objection and assure the prospect this objection is not going to be a problem when they have seen the remaining portion of the presentation *(objections thrive on opposition, but they die with agreement)*. Second, we treat the objection as a question and then use that question as the catalyst to get the prospect involved in the sales process. Third, we get the commitment—this is the *only* question—and fourth, when possible, use the objection as the reason they should buy and urge them to go ahead and do exactly that.

Don't misunderstand: No single formula or procedure can or will fit every sales situation or objection you are going to encounter. However, this basic formula or procedure, when completely mastered, will give you a solid foundation which permits you to move easily into those situations which are not tailor-made for the formula itself.

As we delve further into the objections, I hope you notice we generally, but not always, follow that basic formula. I urge you to keep this formula in mind, because as we deal with the various objections, it would be redundant to keep reminding you of it.

These Are Easy

Let's start with the easy prospect first. "Gary Gullible" himself. Bless his heart, he's the one who gives all of us hope because he certainly brightens our day when we encounter him. He's the kind who still believes the moon is made of green cheese. You deal with him in an open, straightforward way. Tell him lots of human-interest stories. He's more likely to buy because he likes and trusts you than for any other reason. He responds to persuasion but is offended with speed and pressure. Deal with him gently but confidently.

The second prospect is "Sidney Skeptical," who demands a bacteria count on the milk of human kindness and is so cynical he thinks someone pushed Humpty Dumpty. Not only is he skeptical, but in many cases he will be argumentative as well. I especially remind you on this one that the skeptical, antagonistic prospect wants to be right and he wants to be understood. With this in mind, when he raises a dogmatic objection with a little anger, cynicism, or sarcasm hidden underneath it, you should respond

by saying, “I’m delighted you raised that question, Mr. Prospect, and to make absolutely certain I clearly understand what you’re saying, would you mind repeating it?”

This does two things: It indicates an honest effort on your part to be fair, and it also indicates you place considerable importance on what the prospect is saying. Additionally, when he repeats his objection, chances are good he will substantially reduce the tone of the objection.

In dealing with skeptical, antagonistic prospects, it’s important you not try to argue or contradict what they’re saying, even if they are wrong. First, let them finish saying what they have to say; get it off their chest; blow off that steam. Once that is out of their system and they’ve seen that you are interested and concerned about them, your chances of penetrating their minds and closing the sale, as the late John M. Wilson would have said, are increased substantially.

When the prospect brings up a dogmatic or strong statement in objection form, you pleasantly say, “Your question pleases me, Mr. Prospect, because it gets to the very heart of the matter, and since that is what I like to do, it indicates we are on the same page.”

The third prospect (soon to be known as “Hostile Helen”) is cut from the same bolt of cloth, but one important thing to remember is that she is probably hostile for a reason. It could be because she’s been abused or misled by a salesperson in the past. It could be something as simple as a previous salesperson not listening to her complaint.

One of the secrets is to get “Hostile Helen” talking. As she expresses her anger you fall back on one of the oldest of the old (known to sales trainers as the “Three-F principle”) as you say, “I know exactly how you *feel*. Others in the past have *felt* the same way [pause]. They *found* when they had all the facts there was some justification in the procedure which was followed. They felt any mistake which might have been made was a mistake of the head and not of the heart.

“Incidentally, Mrs. Prospect, one of the things that pleases me about what you’re saying is this: I have found that most people who are as frank and open *[don’t you dare say “angry” or “hostile”]* as you are turn out to be more receptive. They are open and fair-minded when they have their questions answered, so I’m pleased you bring your concerns forward in such an open manner.”

They Can't Decide—on Anything

Then there's "Indecisive Ivan," who wanted to start a procrastinators' club but decided to wait until later. Ivan simply cannot make a decision. The indecisive prospect is the kind of person who is in many ways the unhappiest of all people. They can't decide what to have for lunch, much less decide on a major purchase such as a home, a car, a major investment, or a life insurance program. They take a pep pill to get charged up to do something, then mix it with Valium so if nothing happens it won't bother them.

The way to deal with them is to win their confidence, which you do, as I've repeatedly said, by being the right kind of person. Demonstrate considerable empathy; move to their side of the table; let them know you're on their side; reassure them that, yes, they are making the right move. Your own conviction and belief that your product is what they should buy will be the determining factor. Remember, they're having trouble deciding if they should buy. If you have any doubts that you should sell, you can rest assured that they won't buy. Push them—be firm but not harsh.

Inner pressure is a key factor. You apply this by asking even more questions than you normally would. Later in this segment of *Secrets of Closing the Sale*, I will demonstrate in considerable detail exactly *how* you ask questions and I will give you numerous examples.

Another type of prospect, identified by Jim Savage as "Betty Bargain Hunter" and sometimes known as "Cautious Charlie," always wants a little better deal than anyone else. She considers every purchase a "contest." She's got to feel she is the "winner," and she won't be happy unless she gains some kind of concession. You can handle this one in two ways: First, you say to her that one of the beautiful things about working with this company is the fact that you treat everyone in the same manner. She can buy your product with the complete assurance that no one—but no one—is going to get a better offer from the company than she did and that her offer makes her a winner. Generally speaking, that's what she wants—the assurance that she is the winner—that *she* is the smart one—that *she* got your best offer.

Second, you can tie it down if there is something you as an *individual* can do for her personally which not only guarantees no one got a better offer but that she got the *best* offer because she got *you.* It can be a personal service:

“One thing I will do for you that I normally do not do is I will personally take your order to shipping and see that it is handled—at no extra cost to you—for immediate shipment today.” Or “I will personally walk your credit through and save at least twenty-four hours for delivery.” Or “Since I am going to be heading your way, I will personally be present when the equipment is installed to make certain it is to your exact specifications.”

They’re Painful—Make Them Profitable

The next prospect is “Oliver Obnoxious,” the loudmouthed know-it-all. Generally speaking, the obnoxious of the world are suffering from serious self-image problems and feel the only recognition they can gain is of a negative nature. Attention is what they crave, so give them attention but in a firm and positive way. You also challenge that individual. Aside from all of their bluster, in many cases underneath they are soft and mushy. They, too, want to be right—they want to be understood—they want to be appreciated.

You challenge them with statements like, “Our research indicates that only 3 percent of the population is in a financial position to purchase this product.” Or “These payments are going to be large, Mr. Prospect; can you handle one of . . .” Then quote the amount.

These obnoxious, know-it-all people also like to have their pride appealed to. “This is a particularly nice suit,” or “an especially beautiful landscape theme. It certainly fits in with your taste and with your character because it puts you in an especially elite group.” This is real snob appeal, which is important to them. Along these lines it is good to point out that the local television personality or sports hero also has “this particular model.” (Say this only if it is factual. As the late Bill Gove, one of the real pros in sales training, used to say, “Never lie or ‘loop.’”)

The “I’m in a Hurry” Prospect

To this list add “Heloise Hurry-up,” the prospect who doesn’t want to be bothered with the details. She wants the “facts, just the facts, I’ve got things to do, I’m in a hurry!” Many times these people really are more interested in saving time than they are in saving dollars. Be brief; be to the point; be

businesslike; close the sale as quickly as you can; assure her that you'll handle the details, you'll take care of the delivery, you'll personally see to it she gets exactly what she wants; then make absolutely certain you follow through.

Next comes "Jolly Jimmy," the playful, good-natured prospect who in many ways can be the most frustrating of all because on occasion he is impulsive and indecisive. He is far more likely to buy from someone he likes and enjoys being around. Make friends with him—laugh with him—be casual. Then—as a *friend*—encourage him to go ahead and take action now so he can enjoy the benefits now.

The Know-It-All Prospect

"Nora Know-It-All" is out to impress you, so let her. You've certainly got nothing to lose. One word of caution: She might want to bend your ear all day, so be aware of the time factor. You might let her impress you by paying cash for the order and, in fact, a challenge to do so could be the key in getting the order.

The same basic approach should be used with "Bobby Big Shot." He wants to feel important, so by all means, make him feel important. He wants to be on center stage, so let the spotlight shine on him. By the same token, he likes to know he is not dealing with "one of the boys," but rather someone who is qualified to handle *his* account. If you've set a few sales records or if you have accomplished something significant, work it in in a nonthreatening way so Mr. Big will know he's dealing with someone who is qualified to handle such an important person.

Just as we have the timid procrastinator who can't make a decision, we also frequently encounter "Impulsive Irene" who will say yes or no in pretty short order. Once you've got her agreeing with you and you've headed her toward a sale, go ahead and close with conviction and with firmness. Get the order signed while she's at the top of her impulse.

The Toughest of All

Sales trainer John Hammond identifies the toughest prospect as “Agreeable Al,” the one who doesn’t object at all. He “yeses” you all through the interview, smiles, nods, and agrees with everything. John handles him in this way: When he instinctively feels, early in the interview, this prospect is *that* kind and that he is not going to buy, John stops right in the middle of a sentence, smiles, leans forward, and says, “Mr. Prospect, do you mind if I ask you why you have decided not to accept this opportunity to take advantage of the benefits our product offers?” Then he stops—doesn’t say another word.

“Agreeable Al” will do one of two things. He will say, “It’s because . . .” and then he will give you an objection which you can deal with, *or* he will say, “What makes you think I’ve decided not to buy?” If that’s the case, you just go ahead and write his order. Good strategy, John.

There Are All Kinds of Prospects

I suppose if we made an effort, we could list a hundred different kinds of prospects: slow thinkers, fast thinkers, wrong thinkers, and nonthinkers; big spenders, conservative penny pinchers, criticals, bargain hunters, timid, assertive, impulsive, needler, argumentative, nonlistener, stone face, harassed executive, etc.

Then there are the old, the young, and the middle-aged; the male and the female; the rich and the not-so-rich; and everything between. Regardless of the prospect, everyone wants to be right, to be understood, to be appreciated. All have physical, spiritual, and emotional needs. Our objective is to meet those needs so these prospects will be our customers instead of remaining under a label as prospects.

Of course, as Bill Gove would laughingly say, “The problem with making a sale is you’ve just lost your best prospect.”

One thing to remember is many times when prospects bring up objections in a dogmatic, antagonistic way, it is often a defense mechanism. Your prospect, for example, might suggest that “all salesmen are a bunch of crooks.” The point is that as a salesperson you shouldn’t take offense. One or two unfortunate experiences might have led them to this conclusion. Chances are excellent they *want* to find a truly professional salesperson who will convince them that they have reached an erroneous conclusion.

They *might* even want to buy something *now.* That means the chances are excellent they want somebody to sell them something, and since you're there, it might as well be you.

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The Salesman's Friend

In handling objections, one of the most important things to do is ask questions. As I've stated on several different occasions, questions help you to persuade the person to take action. Questions enable you to uncover the prospect's dominant buying motive, which you must do if you're going to be effective in selling.

Caution: Many times it is easy, when the customer vehemently brings up a complaint, for you to be too ready to agree with the prospect and take sides against your company. I urge you to proceed with extreme caution in dealing with the complaint. Follow the techniques we've been talking about. Act pleased that they have brought it up. Hear them out. Agree with them that, yes, there is a problem. Find out if that is their only problem. Assure them that you, the company, and in all probability the other salesperson want to clear the air and solve the problem to everyone's benefit. Then use that complaint as the main reason they should do business with you and your company.

After a strong complaint say, "Mr. Prospect, would you repeat exactly what happened so I can be certain I understand the situation and we can solve the problem?" You are acting as an arbitrator, as a go-between. You've not denied the right of the prospect, and neither have you put your company in an awkward position. That's good because when all the facts are known, the prospect could be (and often is) grossly overstating the case. If that is so and you make promises which you cannot keep, you will look foolish, the company will be further discredited, and the customer will be even more "anticompany."

With this procedure you diffuse much of their anger without going behind the back of the other salesperson. This keeps their—and the company's—credibility intact.

The more violent the objection, the more critical it is that you follow this procedure, because reasonable people generally are not overly belligerent or vehement in their protests.

Objection or Question?

In dealing with objections, we need to make certain we're dealing with an objection and not a question. The way you tell the difference is simple. A question is an inquiry seeking information. How much does it cost? How long will it take me to get it? Do you have it in green as well as in yellow? Do you have a more expensive or a less expensive model? Do you have a bigger one or a smaller one? Those are questions which you answer. Generally speaking, questions are a sign of interest and are asked in the body of the presentation.

Under normal circumstances I've always believed in answering questions when they are asked, provided they do not completely disrupt the sales presentation itself. Example: If in the first part of the presentation the prospect asks, "What does it cost?" you might or might not want to answer it at that point, depending on whether your product is competitively priced or whether you're the top of the line. Experience, common sense, and judgment should dictate your approach *if* you have a definite price advantage.

If your product has definite quality and feature benefits but is not competitively priced, if possible you should avoid answering the price question until you have explained or demonstrated some of your benefits.

Here Are the Words

A direct answer to the prospect when they ask the price could be this: Smile pleasantly and say, "I'm coming to that in just a moment." Or "I'm pleased you're interested in the price. In a few minutes when I cover it you'll be glad you asked." If the prospect persists, you might say, "I'd be pleased to answer, Mr. Prospect, but it would be somewhat like having to pay for a suit before you saw what you were getting. All I want to do is make certain you

see exactly what our benefits are so you can appreciate what a bargain you will be getting."

Yet another answer, provided this fits, could be, "There are so many factors involved in price, such as size, model, terms, and delivery, I hesitate to answer before we have narrowed down the choices I can offer you."

When the prospect asks the price before you have had an opportunity to establish value or explain benefit, you could also handle it this way: Look at them, smile, and say, "That's the part you're going to be delighted with. I'm pleased that you are already interested enough to inquire about the price. I'll get to it in just a moment." Then I would move along into the presentation itself.

Stay Tuned In to Your Prospect's Timing

The speed with which you move is important. Don't act like you're on the way to the races, but when you say you'll get to the price in a moment, quickly describe some attractive features and benefits that will justify the price.

Let me emphasize that some prospects by nature are short on patience, and if they demand an answer in another minute or two, you could take this approach: "Mr. Prospect, I appreciate your concern, and please know that I am not evading the issue. However, until we determine, as a result of our discussion, what your needs are, it would be impossible for me to give you a figure. My answer at this point might be too high or it might be too low. If it's too high, you might lose interest. If it's too low, then when I give you the true figure you would be disappointed."

At that point you move back into the presentation. If, however, the prospect again demands the price, I do not believe you can stall the issue any longer, so meet it head-on by giving them the highest possible price, including *all* the features, attachments, extras, or benefits which go with your product or service. Do this by saying, "The highest possible price is," and then quote the figure. "However, chances are good the actual figure will be less when we've determined your exact needs. I suspect your primary concern is that the product meets your needs, isn't it, Mr. Prospect?" Wait for their answer, then move back into features and benefits.

If the prospect indicates the price was about what they had expected or even less than they thought it would be, you ask the closing question. "Since the product meets your needs and is easily within your price range, would you like to have me install the equipment right away or do you have a specific date in mind?"

You Don't Have to Overcome All Objections

Throughout any interview or presentation you must remember that you are not in the "objection-answering" business. You do not have to answer all objections in order to make the sale. Realistically, seldom, if ever, will there be a situation in which your prospect likes *everything* about your product, goods, or services. Fortunately, your prospect doesn't have to like everything in order to buy your product. All the prospect has to do in order to be a customer is to like what you sell *more* than they like what they will have to exchange for it.

Example: I bought a suit despite the fact there were two things I didn't like about it. First of all, I wasn't too happy about the price, but with a little help from my friend (and then clothier) Doyle Hoyer and the Redhead, I was able to justify the price. (Everything is expensive, quality costs, long-lasting, you need to look successful, etc.) Second, I didn't like the fact that I would have to wear a belt with the trousers, but that was minor.

Despite those two objections I bought the suit because I really liked the color and the way the suit fit. Additionally, when I slipped my suit on, my Redhead, who has got to be the world's number one hugger, snuggled up real close and said the suit felt good. 'Nuff said.

My major point is this: Often there will be objections you'll be unable to answer. There is even a slight chance the objection or question will have no answer, so don't worry too much about it. When the prospect does bring up an objection, let me remind you that you are in the sales business and the objection, when properly handled, is a friend which can help make the sale.

You Are Not in the Objection-Answering Business

Many times young salespeople (in sales experience, not birthdays) or insecure salespeople acquire the mistaken idea they're in the objection-answering business. As a result of this misguided thinking, they actually *encourage* or challenge the prospects to raise additional questions or objections. This is especially true if the salesperson gives a sharp answer (in their own opinion, of course) to a tough question or objection. As a sales trainer, I have seen the salesperson almost literally fold their arms and stick their chin out, or by some other body language say to the prospect, "And I'll guarantee you I can handle the next one, too, so go ahead and shoot another one at me; just try me!"

With this attitude the sale is often lost because the prospect invariably gets the feeling the salesperson has an ego problem and is more interested in parading sales knowledge than in solving their (the prospect's) problem.

Rephrase and Soften the Objection

Many times an objection can be softened a great deal by rephrasing it. For example, the prospect might say, "The quality of your product certainly leaves a lot to be desired. I don't believe it would last three weeks, much less the three years your warranty covers!" Pretty strong—but it can be largely neutralized or defused by rephrasing it. You do this by lowering your voice, looking directly at your prospect, and saying, "If I understand you correctly, you want to be certain the product has lasting quality and you're going to get dollar value for every dollar you invest. Is that your question, Mr. Prospect?" *Or* you could shorten it and say, "So your *question* is _____. Is that right?" (Never say, "To answer your objection . . .")

Chances are excellent they will accept the rephrasing of their objection. (Most people *over*state objections, especially if at that moment they're not really interested. This often discourages the salesperson and causes them to withdraw, which is what the prospect had hoped for.) From this softer, friendlier base you're in a much better position to move in a positive direction toward the sale. This way *you are using your selling skills as a tool to persuade and not as a club to subdue.* This works to the mutual advantage of you and your prospect.

Be Gentle When You Go on the Offensive

The comment most frequently made by the prospect is, “I’m just not interested.” Voice inflection and tone will determine whether this is a mild objection, moderate objection, or strong objection.

If the objection is mild to moderate, you say, “I’m a little surprised to hear you say you’re not interested, Mr. Prospect, because this would [state your product’s major benefit]. However, I’m certain you have a good reason for your lack of interest. Would you be willing to share that reason with me?” Once again, the ball is back in their court.

Sales trainer John Hammond says that since he started using this approach in 1957, only two prospects (he vividly remembers the details) have refused to give him their reasons for not being interested. John says this eliminates the *guesswork* as to why the prospect is not interested and enables you to deal directly with the *real* objection.

If the prospect’s tone is harsh and dogmatic when they say, “Not interested,” you should adopt the policy of the late Charlie Cullen and be a little audacious. Repeat the words *not interested* in such a way you are making a statement *and* asking a question. There’s that voice inflection again. By handling it this way you effectively force your prospect to deal with *your* statement, rather than having to be defensive yourself. It’s much more effective.

When the prospect brings up *any* objection and you don’t really know *why* they bring it up, instead of guessing, you should *ask*, as sales trainer Lee DuBois suggests: “Obviously, Mr. Prospect, you have some good reason for saying that [or “feeling this way”]. Do you mind if I ask what it is?” Stop—and wait for their answer.

Think about It. Chances are excellent if you’ve been in the world of selling for three days you’ve already dealt with a prospect who, after you have made your presentation, states, “I want to think about it.” To put this into perspective as well as to reveal something to you about human nature and prepare you to close the sale, let me share with you a procedure I follow when I present this information to a group.

I ask the group, “How many of you consider yourselves reasonably honest?” (All hands go up.) Then I ask, “How many of you reasonably honest salespeople have ever told another salesperson that you wanted to ‘think about it’?” (Again, all hands go up.) Then I ask, “How many of you

reasonably honest salespeople, after you told the salesperson you were going to 'think about it,' honestly, legitimately, seriously, and carefully thought about the offer which had been made to you?" At this point few, if any, hands go up. Then I ask, "Were you 'honest' salespeople by any chance trying to get rid of that salesman?"

The answer to that question could well be yes or no. Actually, sometimes the prospect does want to terminate the interview or get rid of the salesperson. The statement "I want to think about it" or "talk to my lawyer, my banker, my partner, my mate, etc." is a simple way to graciously end the sales interview. However, there is another possibility.

Most people hate to use the word *no* because, as previously stated, it is so final. At this point it is important that as salespeople we must *always* remember we also are consumers and *we need to be able to think as a buyer as well as a seller.* Obviously, this is the empathy I talk about in chapter 8. With empathy you are not part of the problem, but you understand the problem, which you can help solve if you understand the thinking of the prospect.

Actually, They Won't "Think It Over"

Don't overlook this major point. Your prospect who wants to "think it over," in the vast majority of cases, will not actually do that, just as you yourself probably will not seriously think it over by weighing and evaluating all the pros and cons of the offer. In short, most prospects who want to "think it over" don't really do that, so in far too many cases they are eventually going to say no.

Obviously, circumstances vary. Again, common sense and experience should always be a factor, but as a guideline let me assure you that a *no* today is better than a *no* tomorrow. Obviously, a *yes* tomorrow is better than a *no* today, but I emphasize, when they don't want to make a decision for no apparent reason, in most cases they will say *no* tomorrow.

It's better to have the *no* today than tomorrow for the simple reason it clears your mind. You can now pursue new prospects and not count on that one for a future sale. Once you count on a no prospect for a future sale, you fall into the trap of not prospecting for new prospects, and the sale you miss today will cost you sales tomorrow.

Handle It This Way

There are a couple of ways you can effectively handle the "think about it" stall. First, you can smile and say, "That's great! I'm delighted you want to think about it, because obviously you would not waste your time thinking about our offer if you were not interested. Therefore, I assume you want to think about it to help reduce the chances of error whether your decision is yes or no. Is that a valid assumption, Mr. Prospect? [Get an answer.] Would you agree that the *length* of time you think about something is not the important point? If I'm reading you right [I use this phrase a lot] and I think I am, your prime objective is to be as certain as possible that you make the right decision, regardless of whether you think about it two minutes or two days. The *right* decision for you is what you're seeking, isn't it, Mr. Prospect?

"Businesspeople and efficiency experts agree that the best time to make accurate decisions is when you have the necessary facts which are unclouded with other issues of the day. This way you can be more certain your thought process is aimed at making the correct decision, based on factual information which is fresh in your mind. Forgotten facts or confused information will almost always lead to a faulty decision. With this in mind, could we think together for a minute to make certain you arrive at the right decision, which is what you want, isn't it, Mr. Prospect?" Wait for answer.

The "Four Question" Close

"Actually, there are only four questions you need to answer in your own mind and you've already voted yes on three of them. [Pause after each of these questions.] Do you like it? Do you want it? Can you afford it? The only remaining decision is: When do you want to start enjoying the benefits? Obviously, you are the only one who can answer that question, but, Mr. Prospect, may I ask you another question? [Pause.] The price will remain constant or possibly increase. Since benefits and enjoyment can start only when you acquire the product, your only decision boils down to when you want to enjoy the benefits, doesn't it, Mr. Prospect? [Pause.] With this in mind, doesn't it make sense to vote yes for *now* benefits?"

Executive Mark Gardner, who was with E. F. Hutton and Company, Inc., in Houston, Texas, when this book was originally released, was more direct with this question: “Do you want to think about it because I may have overlooked some salient point in my presentation?” or “What is it you really want to think about?” “Would you elaborate on this?” After the answer, Mark continued.

“Mr. Prospect, wouldn’t you say that *in order to make an intelligent decision* you must have:

1. good access to the information;
2. expertise in order for you to evaluate;
3. perhaps a personal acquaintance with the management?

“Mr. Prospect, that is exactly what has been done here. What we are discussing are important business decisions.

“Very often people like yourself might say, ‘Let me think about it,’ or ‘Let me call you back.’ What they are really saying is that they don’t like the idea. Let’s speak frankly for a moment.

“Please—don’t just be polite. Is there something you feel uncomfortable about? Something else you want to know?

“As a businessman it’s important for me to know . . .”

Here’s another approach. If your prospect has a sense of humor and says they want to think about it, you look at them, smile, and with an exaggerated hand motion, thrust your arm out to expose your wristwatch and say, “Go!” The late Dick Gardner, founder of the National Association of Sales Education (NASE), taught me that one, and it generally gets a good, solid laugh. More importantly, it serves as a tension breaker and sales are made. Use this technique with discretion, but it’s a safe bet that unless you are selling a life-or-death product, any time you can make your prospect smile or chuckle during the closing process you’re ahead of the game.

Here’s another, especially if you’re selling a lifetime product. “Mr. Prospect, it’s just as inexpensive to have it all your life as it is to own it part of your life. With that in mind, it will cost you a lot less per year, per month, per day, to own it from now on instead of waiting five years or even five months and then getting it. With that in mind, don’t you think you ought to start enjoying the benefits now?”

Start Logically—End Emotionally

Remember that when you are dealing with a prospect who brings out objections, you need to start with a *logical* answer but you close with an emotional one. Our *thinking* brain is only 10 percent as large as our *feeling* brain. People are moved to buy more from an emotional point of view than they are from a logical point of view.

When objections are introduced and you handle them one by one in such a way the prospect likes you and trusts you, you can generally tell when you begin to make progress toward the sale. The prospect starts getting friendly, goes back for another look, picks up the product one more time. Sometimes they simply get quiet and start reading the agreement or some of the promotional literature which you have placed in front of them.

Suppose the prospect brings up a question or objection which you cannot answer. You respond this way: “That’s obviously an important question, Mr. Prospect, or you wouldn’t have brought it up at this point in the interview. I commend you on your insight, but since no one else has ever raised the question, I don’t have the complete answer. Since it is important to you, and quite frankly, to me as well, I’d rather personally get the information from our support personnel at the home office to make certain it is completely accurate. If that’s satisfactory, I’ll get back to you the first of the week.”

Incidentally, *you never say*, “Do you understand what I’m saying?” Instead you ask, “Have I made myself clear?” or “Have I clarified this point to your satisfaction?”

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Using Objections to Close the Sale

How many do you answer? Many times I am asked, “How many objections should you answer before you attempt to close?” In my judgment, two to three should be the maximum number, and in most cases it will just be two (remember—there is a difference between questions and objections). When your prospect raises either the second or third objection (it will vary according to the circumstances), look your prospect in the eye (your training in tone and voice inflection covered earlier will be invaluable at this point) and say, “Mr. Prospect, let me ask you a question. Is this the only thing which stands between you and ownership of _____, or is there something else you need to consider?”

If the prospect says, “No, this is the only thing I’m concerned about,” at that point you cover the objection and make a positive statement in question form. “I believe that answers your question, doesn’t it?” If you get no response or a positive response, you continue, “I’m delighted I was able to answer your question, because I know you are going to love the product!” You assume the close because the prospect had said only one objection stood between them and ownership and you had secured agreement from them that the barrier (question, objection) had been removed.

The “Talking Pad” Close

Many times a prospect has more than one question or objection, so they could respond to the question in the last paragraph like this: “Well, no, in addition to not being convinced the price is fair, I seriously question your ability to service the account, and frankly, your guarantee leaves much to be

desired.” When your prospect has expressed these three objections, you reach for your talking pad and write them down in abbreviated form as you say, “If I understand you correctly, Mr. Prospect, your prime *questions* are, number one, price.” (Write the word *price.*) “Number two, you are concerned about our service.” (Write the word *service.*) “And number three, you question our guarantee.” (Write the word *guarantee.*)

Now you have only three words on your talking pad: price, service, and guarantee. Look your prospect in the eye and say, “In other words, Mr. Prospect, if you could convince yourself the price is competitive, that we have the ability to properly service the account, and our guarantee is more than fair, you would be comfortable in making a *yes* decision concerning our product. Is that what you’re saying?” Get a commitment.

If the prospect says yes, then you go to the price objection and deal with it. I remind you that in chapters 5 and 24, I have dealt in great detail with how to handle this objection, so at this point you utilize that information. When you complete the handling of the price objection, you look at the prospect and make the statement in the form of a question: “Surely, Mr. Prospect, this satisfies you on the price, doesn’t it? If it does, Mr. Prospect, then with your permission I would like to remove ‘price’ as one of the questions. Is that all right?” (Nod your head as you cross out the word *price.*) Incidentally, “Is that fair enough?” “Does that make sense?” and “Is that all right?” are three of the *strongest* trial closing questions.

Remove the Barriers One by One

Next you deal with the service question or objection. At this point there is nothing more convincing than reviews from satisfied customers who have specifically dealt with the service aspect of your business. Since this is a question of company stability and integrity, your membership in the chamber of commerce and the Better Business Bureau, as well as references to the size, age, and integrity of your company, is important. As you get the verbal and body-language feedback from your prospect, you conclude the service presentation by asking, “Does this answer your question as it relates to our service reputation?” If it does, then ask, “May I then remove the question concerning our service capability?” As you ask the question, you

assume a positive answer and literally cross it out with your felt-tip or ballpoint pen.

"The third question, Mr. Prospect, had to do with the guarantee which we offer. Let me start by saying that any guarantee is only as good as the company which offers that guarantee. As I have already demonstrated, we do represent a viable, solid business establishment. One thing I emphasize, Mr. Prospect, is that unless the guarantee is fair to both buyer and seller, it has no value. If we, as a company, couldn't live with it, we would be out of business. Then, regardless of how extensive the guarantee might be, it would have no value. Our guarantee protects you from virtually everything but human error and carelessness, as well as abuse of the product. Our product, as I have demonstrated, is built for use but not abuse. We protect you from all manufacturing defects as well as normal use. I believe, Mr. Prospect, that's your major concern, isn't it?"

Parade Your Strengths

Because each company has its own strong points, I urge you to learn what yours are and handle them accordingly. The prime consideration in dealing with objections like this is not to become defensive or in any sense of the word attack your prospect or raise your voice. "Mr. Cool" is the phrase here. Calm, quiet assurance is what the prospect is seeking. To repeat myself, it is at this point in the negotiation that your qualities as a person are just as important as your sales skills. If you're the right kind of person and have acquired the professional skills, you should lose very few sales because of objections.

After you have covered those objections, including that third one, look the prospect in the eye and say, "I believe, Mr. Prospect, in your own mind you feel pretty good about our guarantee, don't you?" Again, you assume the positive answer and, with a big smile, cross out the final objection.

At this juncture, you will have utilized the information provided for you by your own company trainer and your company literature. One more time, *Secrets of Closing the Sale* was written primarily to reinforce your company efforts, not to replace them.

When you have covered all three of the objections, you look at the prospect and say, "You know, Mr. Prospect, I wish everyone I deal with was

as concise with their questions as you are, because if a person knows their own feelings, it makes it easier and more fun to demonstrate our products. I know that you are going to love this product!" With a big smile you extend your hand as you assume the sale.

Caution: Don't "overanswer" any one objection. First, it could indicate, in the mind of the prospect, you are defensive to the point you are uncertain about your product. Even worse, you could so overwhelm the objection that your prospect could be made to feel like an idiot for mentioning it. As we'd say down home, "That ain't the way to sell 'em!"

Kevin's Xponential Insight #15: Shine a Light on Your Competition

Most people want to avoid even mentioning alternative or competitor's products. But people are going to want to shop around and ensure they've found the best product—so make it easy for them. Go ahead and make the comparison by shining a light *on your competition*.

For example, when we sold the Dual Saw, we hired an outside expert in tools from a well-known DIY store and home improvement channel and filmed them comparing the tools. We didn't want customers to think they had to visit a store first to make an informed purchasing decision. We asked the question for them: What other options are out there? Our expert identified the top five alternatives. Then, we showed each one of them in action in our commercial.

More specifically, we showed each of them trying and failing to do something our product could do. For example, an alternative to the Dual Saw was a basic handsaw. Sure, it cuts through wood, but watch as we try to cut through stone—the blade would break. This other product slices thin metal, but balks at a steel rod. Then, we would show how our "bad boy" cut right through stone or steel like butter. By showing the limitations of our top competitors, we increased the value of our product in the mind of the customer.

One thing we did not do was put down the other products. In fact, we built them up in some way, noting what they could do, but then demonstrating how our product was better. This way, the viewers, who may at one point have purchased a comparison product, felt empowered to decide for themselves. Especially today in the digital era when everyone can click to Amazon to compare prices, it's important to preempt that objection with the Bad Boy Close.

Affirm their ability to make good decisions and then empower them to make a *new decision* based on new information. If you need to compare your products or service with others to get people to commit, consider using the Bad Boy Close to get the job done.

The “Safety Valve” or “Punt and Pray” Close

In handling objections, I personally believe we all need to have what Dick Gardner called “safety valves.” Hal Krause calls this the “Punt and Pray” approach. All experienced salespeople have been asked questions or have been confronted with objections which they know how to handle but, unfortunately, can’t recall at the moment of need. When this happens you can’t just clam up for a couple of minutes. Nor is it advisable to say, “I know the answer but can’t think of it, so give me a minute or two and I’ll give you the answer.” Since you know the answer (assuming you *do*), you should develop some “safety valves” or “punt and pray” fillers.

Here’s the way they work. The prospect asks the question or raises the objection for which you have an answer but cannot immediately recall, so you “punt and pray” by saying, “I’m delighted you raised this question, because in my mind it is quite important. I commend you for having the interest and insight to explore this facet of our offer. [Obviously, if you can’t sincerely say this, then the “pray” part of “punt and pray” needs to be literal.] This interest and insight will enable you to more completely utilize the services which we offer so you’ll get the maximum benefit.” By this time you should have recalled the specific answer to the objection, so go ahead and answer it.

The same approach can be taken when you have the answer ready for use but you want to phrase it in the best possible way. For example, a doctor might need to think through the gentlest manner in which to deliver distressing medical news. A loving parent or mate will want to soften distressing or upsetting news, so voice tone, words, and manner play an important part. You know the answer, but delivering that answer is the tough part.

Play It Cool—Use a Safety Valve

Occasionally a prospect will make a dogmatic statement which necessitates a built-in safety valve. For example, your prospect might say, “I wouldn’t

do business with that outfit you represent in a hundred years!" They're dogmatic, even a little vehement in his statement. Your "safety valve" procedure is simple and effective. Lower your voice, look them in the eye, and say, "Mr. Prospect, it's obvious you feel quite strongly about this issue, so you must have an excellent reason for feeling as you do. Would you mind sharing with me why you feel this way?"

Very soft, very quiet, but when you follow this procedure you will remove much of the vehemence and emotion from the scene. Interestingly enough, in most cases you will discover the problem involves a personality conflict, a communications gap, or some insignificant detail. However, regardless of its actual size, if it's big in the eyes of the prospect—it's big.

Regardless of its size or significance, this procedure brings the objection into the open so that you can deal with it. The key to this approach is not to take it personally when the prospect attacks your company, its procedures and policies, or a past incident. Remember, if you lose your cool, you lose the sale.

The "Alternate of Choice" Close Revisited

Much of this has been dealing primarily with the direct or in-house salesperson who has more time and who works under different circumstances from the salesperson who is in a regular retail outlet; hence, the answers and procedures are different. There also is the factor that virtually all direct sales, whether in cosmetics, cookware, life insurance, vacuum cleaners, encyclopedias, some types of commercial printing, Girl Scout cookies, raffle tickets, etc. are generally sold on a one-call basis.

If the prospect is in a retail store, after you have answered the objections you handle the final part in a slightly different way. You assume the close but you do so with an alternate of choice by saying—*always* pleasantly —"I'm delighted I was able to answer that particular question, because it's our function here at _____ Company to give our customers the best possible service. I know you will enjoy this product a great deal, and of course, we're here to service it should there be any need. Now let me ask you, would you like to take the product with you or would you prefer that

we deliver it to your door [assuming it's a product the customer could take with them or merchandise that you deliver]?"

Other alternates of choice on the close: "You seem to be leaning toward the red, or do you prefer it in blue?" Yet another: "Did you want us to use your credit card or were you going to handle it by check or cash?"

The "Wheeler Which" Close

The "Alternate of Choice" Close was originally identified during the 1930s by sales trainer Elmer Wheeler, who called it the "Wheeler Which." He was commissioned by the Walgreen Drug chain to help their business. In those days all drugstores had soda fountains which contributed considerably to the profit structure as well as to the flow of traffic in the store.

Malted milks, which sold for fifteen cents, were an extremely popular item in those depression years. One of the things they added to malted milks was eggs. The price of each egg was an extra nickel, and since Walgreen's bought them for fifteen cents a dozen, the more eggs they sold in malted milks, the greater their profit.

When a customer ordered a malted milk, Elmer taught the clerks to hold up two eggs, smile, and ask, "One egg or two?" In the vast majority of cases, though they had not planned to order even one egg, the customers would take the easy way out and say, "One."

Walgreen's discovered that as many customers said "two" as said "none." The number of eggs they sold ran into hundreds of crates each week. The impact on their profit structure was dramatic.

Sometimes the Alternate of Choice involves a very simple decision which will carry a major decision. Example: In the sale of a home the real estate person can say, "One of the things I like to provide for my customers is a beautiful door knocker with your name inscribed on it. Tell me, Mr. Prospect, would you want it in Olde English, Modern American, or Corinthian Script?" Automobile salesmen who sell the luxury cars can offer personalized monograms for the dashboard or door, using the same basic approach.

Obviously, no one buys a home or luxury automobile to get a door knocker or monogram, and no close will really work if the customer does

not want to buy. What this close, as well as the other closes, does for those people who want to buy and plan to buy is simple. It gives them an additional nudge in the form of a reason or excuse to go ahead and take the action *now.* In short, a good close is designed to get a decision and get the decision in your favor. Really good closing makes every customer feel that they're *buying*, you're not *selling.* That feeling is what helps make them a *permanent* customer.

The "Alternate of Choice" Close is used hundreds of times every year by *all* of us. Again, regardless of what your job or profession might be, *you sell every day.*

Parent to child: "Do you want to cut the grass or wash the windows?"

Teacher to student: "Do you want to settle for a *B* or would you prefer to complete the assignment?"

Physician to patient: "Would you like to live longer or keep smoking?"

Attendant to car owner: "Would you like for me to rotate the tires and give you an extra five thousand miles or leave them as they are?"

Suitor to date: "Shall I pick you up at half-past seven or would eight o'clock be better?"

Waiter to diner: "Would you like soup or salad with your dinner?"

Patrolman to speeder: "Would you like to pay the speeding ticket now or do you prefer to go to court on the first of August?"

Point: Since all of us sell every day, doesn't it make sense to learn how to do it more effectively?

Specific Objections

One question frequently asked in my personal visits with salespeople around the country and during seminars when I'm having an open discussion on objections is this one: How do you deal with a prospect who is currently buying from an old and trusted supplier who offers virtually the same product at roughly the same price, gives approximately the same service, and has the added advantage of being a friend or relative with many years' experience in satisfactorily handling the account?

This is a tough one, and what I'm going to say will not answer all of the objections, nor will it get the sale every time. But I am convinced it will

enable you to make some of the sales and will always give you the feeling you are at least in the ballpark of possibility. In short, hope is there.

When the prospect says basically the things I've mentioned above, the worst thing you can do is attack the credibility of the supplier or the quality of their product. That guarantees you will *never* make the sale, nor will you have much of a chance with a frontal assault. However, I believe the possibility for a sale is good with this next approach. It's the method discussed in two or three different sections of the book, and it involves asking a lot of questions.

The "Obligation" Close

You might convince a person with a frontal assault that you have some advantages, but the only way you are going to get their business is to *persuade* them. As previously mentioned, you persuade only by asking questions, so the prospect literally leads themselves into a *yes* decision.

In this particular instance you handle it this way: "Mr. Prospect, if there were a way for you to buy the same product from your current supplier at a better price and get better service in the process, you would be interested in knowing how to do that, wouldn't you?" Wait for an answer, which undoubtedly will be, "Yes, how could I do that?" You: "Before I answer, Mr. Prospect, two more questions, please. Number one, at this precise moment do you feel any obligation whatever to buy anything from me, a complete stranger whom you've never seen before?" (Wait for the answer. It's going to be *no*.)

"Second question, Mr. Prospect. Do you feel any obligation or inclination to continue buying from your current supplier, who is a close friend and with whom you've been dealing for umpteen years?" (Wait for answer. It's going to be *yes* or *some*.) "Basically, Mr. Prospect, it goes without saying that your first loyalty is to yourself and your family and not necessarily what is best for any supplier. Would you agree with this premise, Mr. Prospect?" (If you can get them to agree with this, you've taken one small step toward the sale. If you can't, then obviously you're not dealing with someone who has an open mind.)

I'll "Try Harder"

When you get the answer you respond: "Then, Mr. Prospect, since you are not obligated to me but feel obligated to him, does it make sense that I would be willing to work harder, give you better service, and take care of the account in a more anxious-to-please manner? Doesn't it make sense that I would keep you at the top of my list of priorities so that I can earn your business in the only way open to me, which is giving you a good product at a good price with even better service?" (This kind of logic has got to hit a hot button somewhere.)

"Without being presumptuous, Mr. Prospect, would I be wrong to assume you have considerable interest in the bottom line? [Get answer.] Then if you could get a better price, better quality, and/or better service, any one of those three things would have a direct bearing on your satisfaction and your profitability, wouldn't it? Now, Mr. Prospect, two of them would have a big bearing and three of those factors could make quite a difference in the bottom line.

"With this in mind, Mr. Prospect, and since you've already recognized your first loyalty is to yourself, don't you feel it would be in your best interests to at least give me a chance to prove I can and will give you more for your money? This way I have to *earn* the business, which automatically makes you a winner.

"Please understand, I'm not asking for all of your business. I am simply encouraging you to give me a chance to earn part of your business. You do have a lot to gain and nothing to lose.

"When you receive the shipment, you should display it in a prominent spot so your current supplier will be absolutely certain to see it. When they do, one of two things will happen: (1) They will determine in their own mind that they've got to do a better job or give you a better price in order to keep your business, or (2) you will discover we really can give you better service and/or a better price.

"Could we start you with one gross or would you go for three and the larger discount which goes with it?"

That's What Bill Said

Many years ago Bill Gove, one of my early mentors, covered a simple and effective way to handle this "I'm buying from a friend or relative" objection. However, it wasn't until John Hammond offered it as a suggestion for this book that the real impact hit me. Here it is:

"Mr. Prospect, I understand what you are saying and I can appreciate your interest in maintaining that relationship. I'm not suggesting you take business from them and give to me. However, from time to time I have ideas which I believe will increase your business, which increases the need for my products. If I share those ideas with you, which I'm willing to do, would you be willing to give me the *extra* business which my ideas generate? This way everyone wins. You continue to do business with your friend and your business increases so you and your friend both win. The increase in your business means you must buy more of the product I sell, and so I would benefit because of your increase. Does that sound like a good idea and a fair exchange, Mr. Prospect?"

The "Similar Product" Close

Occasionally a prospect will say, "Your product is just like . . ." and then name another product. When this happens, you don't disagree completely or categorically state that your product is totally different. Instead you find an area of agreement, which is easy to do. You calmly look at your prospect and say, "Yes, I agree with you there are some similarities, which I believe is what you are saying, isn't it, Mr. Prospect? [Get answer.] Along these lines, let me state that the visible difference between an original Rembrandt and a reproduction or imitation is small. However, if you put the imitation and the original up for sale, there would be a substantial difference in price, wouldn't there? With this in mind, Mr. Prospect, let me show you the little differences which make ours the "Rembrandt" of the field as far as performance and quality are concerned. You do want the *best* product at the *best* price, don't you, Mr. Prospect?"

If your prospect has a good sense of humor and they state that "your product or service is just like . . . ," if you're a sales*man*, you go back to the "similar" approach and say, "Yes, they are similar, but I might also point out that my wife and I are very similar. Each of us has two arms, two legs, and

a head, but there are some intriguing differences. To tell you the truth, it's the differences which got us together and it's the differences which are keeping us together!

"It's true there are similarities in our products, but it's the differences which make our product the best buy for you." Now identify the differences, spell out *why* those differences make your product the best buy, and close by saying, "You do want the best for your money, don't you, Mr. Prospect?"

There are many objections and even more answers, but in the final analysis it boils down to this: If you are the right person selling the right product at the right price and you are convinced the customer is the big winner, then you are in the driver's seat. Now to this add the professionalism of knowing and using the right words with the right voice inflection, the right intent, and the right follow-up, and you will increase your closing percentage.

The "Right Experience" Close

Getting a job obviously involves "selling." This example of handling a major objection is primarily aimed at the teenager entering the job market, but with some variations much of it is applicable to any job applicant.

Since I have emphasized from the opening chapter that the salesperson is the most important part of the sales process, I am going to start with the basic assumption the applicant has been taught the importance of honesty, character, integrity, faith, love, and loyalty. They have also been taught to accept responsibility, to be dependable, and to have a good attitude.

Objection: "What Is Your Experience?"

The typical teenager has had no sales training, so when they are asked, "What is your experience?" they are likely to reply: "I don't really have any regular job experience. I've done some babysitting and looked after the neighbors' pets while they were on vacation, but this will be my first job."

A young person may think that is the only answer they can give to such an objection. And as long as they think that and reply in that way, they will find it very difficult to secure a job because they haven't answered the primary objection of this would-be employer.

But the truth is, they do not have to reply as above. If they have received some sales training or attended a sales class, they can say:

"Thank you for asking me about my experience. I realize that's important to you. You want to know if I'm really the kind of person who can do the job so that your customers get the best possible product and service. Do I understand you correctly? [Wait for an answer.]

"Sir, I've had a lifetime of experience which will help me be a better employee. For example, I've learned the importance of being dependable and telling the truth in everything I do. In addition, I've learned the importance of getting along with other people, and I know by experience that everybody does their work better when they're getting along with others.

"I also know that certain things will be expected of me if you hire me. I expect to do the work you give me to do, with a positive attitude and in a responsible manner. I know also that if I want a raise I must be willing to come in early, work a little harder, and stay late if necessary.

"Another thing I understand is that businesses have to make a profit in order to stay in business and pay their employees. It's clear to me that if the employees do a good job, chances are excellent the company will make a profit. In order to keep my job, and get ahead in my job, I am ready to work hard and do my very best. I believe your business and every business needs that kind of experience."

You Told Your Story—Now Close the Sale

Once they have said that—and it only takes a minute or two—this "experienced" teenager can go for the close. I suggest a statement and a question:

"Sir [or Ma'am], I need a job and I'll make you a promise. I'll work hard for you and you will never regret having hired me. In fact, you will be proud that you were the one who gave me my first job and training. I'm ready to go to work immediately or whenever it best suits your needs.

When do you want me to start? Right away, or would the first of the week be better?" (Say no more. The ball is in their court.)

This "sales talk" won't guarantee a job, because that company might not have an opening, but if you give that presentation enough times, I'm confident you'll get a job fairly soon.

Obviously, I don't expect a teenager (scared to death) on their first job interview to calmly give that sales talk, but I do believe this: If you, as a teenage job applicant, will convey that information, I don't believe there's an employer in the country who would not be impressed. They might not hire you, but if you work hard enough to learn that presentation, I believe they will do everything they can to send you to an employer who will give you a job.

I also believe if you are temporarily unemployed and there are no openings in your specialty or your field, you can use this basic approach to get a job in other fields. You do have the kind of "experience," and *lots* of it, that thousands of employers *need.* They will buy you and your experience *if* you sell yourself to them.

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Reasons *and* Excuses for Buying

Sell on the Tangible—Close on the Intangible

In overcoming objections it is often necessary to offer the tangible as the *reason* for buying but emphasize the intangible as the *excuse* for buying. For example, you might be selling a beautiful lot on a lake, an outstanding retirement home, or even one of the vacation packages known as a "time-share." Each one of them definitely offers something tangible which prospective buyers can put their hands on or "sink their teeth into."

However, if the lot on the lake or golf course is typical, it will sell for many thousands of dollars. From a purely logical point of view, to spend that many dollars on a parcel of land which is restricted (to put it kindly) is not really the logical thing to do. The lot is tangible, so there's the reason for buying, but if you're going to get the sale, you need to switch it to the intangible so they also have an excuse for buying.

Example: "In addition to your own beautiful lot, Mr. Prospect, you're getting this marvelous spring-fed lake, which is well stocked with bass and bream. You have the full-time use of the golf course, as well as the peaceful nature trails to either walk or cycle on as your wishes dictate. Perhaps best of all is the fact that you have the quiet serenity of being in an area with people who also desire the quietness of a semi-isolated area such as this. The restfulness and activity at your pace, away from the heat, smog, noise, congestion, and confusion which you encounter in the city, will add joy, peace, and relaxing fun to your life."

The "Deserve It" Close

You have now taken it from the tangible and moved it into the intangible. More appropriately you have taken a tangible base, the property itself, and given the prospect what they really want in the package. You've given them a reason for buying (beautiful lake lot—*real* property) and an excuse for buying (gracious living, less stress, etc.).

You close the sale by saying, "All of your life, Mr. Prospect, you have worked and put much into the world and into the future. Don't you think you now *deserve* to start *enjoying* some of the fruits of all those years of labor and effort? You *owe* it to yourself to do this.

"If I'm reading your wife correctly, she is giving her permission; I'm certainly giving my permission; all that's necessary is for you to give yourself permission to enjoy what you've worked for all of your life. What about it, Mr. Prospect? You do like the property and you do enjoy both golfing and fishing, don't you? Can you really think of any reason you should deny yourself the realization of this dream that you've worked for all of your life?"

Remember—They're Scared

As you talk with your prospect, whether they're buying the lot on the lake, the retirement home, the time-share, or anything else, you need to remember four basic things: First, they need the reassurance that it's all right for them to take this step, that what they're buying is fairly priced, that you represent a legitimate organization, and that your integrity is solid.

The second thing you need to remember is that every prospect, almost regardless of what they're buying in an area which could be defined as nonessential or even luxury, has the haunting fear that they're paying an inflated price and what they're getting is not worth the asking price. You can partially put their fears to rest by having solid evidence of comparative pricing, but ultimately their fears will be put to rest primarily because of their confidence in you as a person. *You* ***are the bridge over which the prospect must cross if they are to*** *move from fearful prospect to confident buyer.*

Number three, you must remember that your prospect's sense of fairness is involved (you are the expert—they are the "innocent lamb"). Perhaps

they have been taken advantage of in the past, and they certainly do not want it to happen again.

Number four, you must remember your prospect is not only buying for themselves but also is buying with other people in mind. They're concerned about what others will think. This is true regardless of the image they attempt to project. They're concerned about what their family, friends, fellow employees, and neighbors think.

That's one of the reasons little phrases like, "You will be the envy of the neighborhood," "Your family will be proud of you for making this move," and "Your fellow workers will be delighted to see you're finally going to give yourself a treat," are so effective. Just remember that there will be some who will kid them about the purchase, and you need to arm them with things to say or you might end up with a cancellation.

Remember—Prospect Buys Future Enjoyment

To tie these things down, just remember the prospect does not buy what the product is, they buy the future enjoyment of what you're selling, regardless of the product. Remember also that they don't buy the house on the lot, they buy the shade of the trees in the yard, the warmth of the fireplace in the cold winter months. They buy the coolness of the evening on the lake, the exhilaration of the downhill skiing experience with their family, the joy of their motorboat on the lake, the luxury of the dip in the heated pool. Again, all of these are the intangibles made possible by the tangible property that they're buying.

A Team of Professionals

The morning before I spoke at one of A. O. Smith Harvestore's national conventions, I had the privilege of spending several hours with one of the real professionals in the world of selling, Carl K. Clayton. I had previously spent time with him in our Born to Win seminar, but that morning I learned a new side of Carl as he shared all the exciting information about their Harvestore structure and what it did for the farmer. It actually is a system which farmers use as a storage unit but which has some decided advantages

over the old-fashioned silo. This unit enables the farmer to store the grain before it is completely dried.

The farmer gathers the grain from the field when the moisture content is 25 to 30 percent. They load the structure with grain from the top of the Harvestore unit. The unit has a pair of "lungs" at the top. This simply means that during expansion and contraction all the air is out of the unit and the farmer is able to dramatically reduce spoilage. With the moisture in the grain, the livestock will eat less grain, which they are able to digest more completely. This saves from 10 to 15 percent on the grain while increasing the meat productivity 10 to 15 percent. It truly is a remarkable concept which is a big dollar saver for the farmer.

The "Reason-Excuse" Close

Another tremendous benefit to the farmer is the fact that by using this system they do not have to bale their hay. They simply gather it and put it into this Harvestore system (I mention only one of their products). The farmer knows that having to bale hay has run more young men off the farm than any other single reason.

In the presentation to the farmer, the Harvestore salesperson can give them some exciting data. Number one, on the average the unit will pay for itself in reduced losses and increased productivity in seven years or less. Number two, the farmer has to work considerably less with the Harvestore system than with other systems whereby the farmer has to bale the hay or gather the grain after it has dried out or have it artificially dried, which is expensive and causes shrinkage.

To sum it up, they're able to sell the unit because the *reason* they give the farmer (which they give to their banker for the necessary financing) is that the unit literally is cost-effective and will save all that money. The reason the farmer uses is the financial one.

Carl told me the real *excuse* most farmers buy is they've talked to Harvestore customers who testify that the work saved gives them more free time and they can even take vacations. *Best of all, the children they are raising will be far more likely to stay on the farm because it makes for a much easier and more modern operation.*

As I say, give a person a *reason* for buying and they *might* buy. Give them an excuse for buying and they *might* buy. Give them a reason *and* an excuse for buying, then make it easy for them to buy, and chances are substantially increased they will buy.

The Toughies Are the Teachers

Over the years, I suppose I have spent as much time on a sales call as most salespeople. It's not that I'm stubborn or hardheaded, though I confess to a degree of that, nor is it entirely due to the fact I'm that persistent, though I'm guilty of that, too. It's not because I'm so competitive that I just hate to miss a sale, though the Redhead would disagree with that particular statement.

There is at least one other reason I have stayed on some calls as long as I have, and that simply is because the tougher the prospect, the better the teacher. The more objections they give me which I overcome, the better able I am to handle the next sales interview. The more roadblocks that are placed in front of me, the sharper I hone my skills. I feel this "firing line" training has enabled me to uncover some great sales truths which I now share with you. I needed lots of "teaching from the toughies" in order to be able to write this book.

You, too, need lots of teaching from the toughies if you are to grow and mature into the kind of salesperson you are capable of being. Howard Bonnell points out that often a prospect will start with an adamant "I won't even consider it" rejection. However, their next objection is weaker and subsequent objections grow progressively weaker.

When the salesperson senses the prospect's will is weakening, they are encouraged and their own resolve grows stronger. I want to say again that I'm not talking about "winning" a contest and imposing the salesperson's will or merchandise upon the prospect. I established in the beginning that the professional really believes they render a service and do the prospect a favor when they sell. In my own case I can emphatically state that *the* major reason I made every legitimate effort to sell anybody anything was because I sincerely felt I was morally obligated to sell the prospect a product *which was good for them.*

There is one specific point, however, when I throw in the towel and withdraw my efforts to close. That point is when the prospect makes it clear —after seeing the benefits—that they have no interest and cannot or will not buy. Until that point, I am going to make an honest effort to close the sale. As I've already indicated, I do this with pleasant persuasiveness, which I will deal with again later on in the book.

As you move into the additional closes which I share with you, do so in a natural manner. The close is part of the process, just as the hands and arms are a part of you. You should move into the close smoothly, naturally, and above all else, without any hesitation. You do this as you attempt to impart a sense of urgency for "action now" on the part of the prospect. With that in mind we attempt to so thoroughly cover these areas of selling throughout this book that "think it over" is changed to "sign me up."

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Using Questions to Close the Sale

Question: How do you persuade people to take action? Answer: You persuade by asking questions that lead the prospect to a conclusion which demands that they take action because it becomes an idea which they (the prospect) originated. This is pressure which the prospect puts on themselves. It's internal pressure and it's powerful.

To paraphrase Socrates—who may have said it best—"If you make a statement to which your prospect will readily agree (cannot refute), then ask a series of questions based on that agreement, and then ask a concluding question based on those agreements . . . , you will force the desired response." This is precisely the method used by successful trial attorneys to transfer their feelings to juries.

Selling Isn't Telling—It's Asking

The ability to ask questions—much like the ability to modulate and use your voice properly—is a skill which is badly neglected and underdeveloped in the world of selling. It's a skill which we as people have unlearned. I say this because the average six-year-old child, under normal circumstances, will ask something like four to seven hundred questions a day, while the average college graduate will ask approximately thirty. If you know anything at all about life or if you've been around children at all, you surely know the six-year-old child is getting more than the college graduate. Asking questions is an important skill that can be learned.

I'm going to give you a number of questions and some of the circumstances under which they can be used. Again, I urge you to adapt

these to your situation because all of them will not completely fit you. Nevertheless, in many cases the idea would be appropriate.

Some questions tie in with the assumptive attitude; others have to do with imagination and impending events and any number of other techniques. Example: In the showing of a home you could, after getting acquainted with the family, simply ask, as sales trainer Tom Hopkins suggests you do when you enter the living room, “Where would you place the sofa in this room?” In another room, “Where would you put Johnny’s bed? Would you prefer it against the wall or more in the center of the room?” I remind you there is no way the prospect can get irritated with you at an answer they give you. Another question: “If this beautiful home had only this gorgeous view or if the tour of the home ended with this magnificent living-den and kitchen, it’s already exciting to see, isn’t it?” Or “If this house had nothing but this location, it would merit consideration, wouldn’t it?”

To set up a closing situation for later in the interview, sometimes you can use this as a lead-in: “Mr. Prospect, many years ago Andrew Carnegie, the man who was responsible for developing forty-three millionaires when millionaires were truly rare, said, ‘Show me a man who can make a decision, act on that decision, and stay with that decision, and I’ll show you a man who will succeed.’ Successful businessmen are almost unanimous in their agreement on this principle, but what’s your personal feeling about this?” Most will agree.

You will use this one when you are talking with a businessperson about an investment in equipment, machinery, or efficiency systems. It would not work if you were selling a young couple some furniture they weren’t sure they could afford.

Kevin’s Xponential Insight #16: Ready, Willing, and Able?

Have you ever seen someone inside one of those money wind machines where cash is flying everywhere, and the person only has so much time to grab all they can get? Well you know what usually happens—they go crazy clutching at everything and usually end up with next to nothing. Prospecting can often feel that same way; you can be really busy chasing down leads and setting up meetings or retargeting ads—only to end up with few real sales to show. Why? Because you’re chasing the wrong people.

The truth is it takes intentional planning to focus on your target audience—the customers or audience you really want as opposed to warm bodies who give you

hope in the short term but don't result in sales. Your idea, product, or service—whatever you sell—isn't for everyone. In fact it may not even be for most people, and that's OK. The sooner you realize this truth, the more efficient your prospects can be.

You may have heard the expression that someone is ready, willing, and able. Well those are also three qualifying questions to ask about prospects at a minimum for them to be in your target audience.

First, are they ready? They must be ready to buy: that means they have a need and your idea, product, or service meets that need.

Second, are they willing? That means they have a desire to buy what you sell.

Third, are they able? That means at least two things: they have the financial means to purchase. (It doesn't matter how much someone needs or wants your product. If they don't have the money, they're not a good prospect.)

And your prospects must have a need you can meet, have a desire for what you're selling, and the ability and authority to make a decision—otherwise you've got suspects, not prospects, and suspects suck your time away.

A prospect is an individual or group capable of making the decision on the product or service the salesperson is selling; a suspect is a name that could be a prospect. A prospect has a need for the product, a possible desire to own that product, and the financial capacity to implement that decision: ready, willing, and able. You spend time with suspects; you invest time with prospects.

Sixteen "Question" Closes

Almost identical to a real estate situation, if you're demonstrating a computer or a piece of equipment, you can ask, "If this were the only feature this machine had, it would be well worth owning, wouldn't it?"

Question: "When we install this equipment, would you like for me to demonstrate the major features again?"

Question: "Would you prefer we deliver today, or would next week fit your schedule better?"

Question: "Would you like for me to mark this one SOLD while we check on the most agreeable terms to finance it for you?"

Question: “Do you need to consult with anyone else before you place the order?”

Question: “Is the purchase order issued from this department?”

Question: “Would you like to have your bank finance this, or would you like for us to work out the financial arrangements?”

Question: “Since the item is in short supply, would you be willing to wait three weeks for delivery?”

Question: “Would you want to make a large deposit so the monthly deposits are smaller, or would you prefer a minimum deposit and slightly larger monthly deposits?”

Question: “Would you prefer this in green, or does the red appeal to you more?”

Question: “Shall we ship it by UPS or FedEx?”

Question: “Do you want the lot registered in your name or your wife’s name?”

Question: “Do you prefer the lot on the golf course, or does the one on the lake appeal to you most?”

Question: “If you saw that it was to your advantage to own this product and the terms we work out are satisfactory, would you have any objections to going ahead today?”

Question: “Can you see the financial advantage to reducing the use of those powerful overhead lights which provide unneeded light in some areas in favor of using point-of-impact lighting during certain times of the day?”

Question: “Do you believe it’s wise to invest in solidly constructed equipment which will give you long, trouble-free operation

for the lifetime of the product?"

Questions for Decisions

Many questions really are "thinking" questions and actually lead the prospect to the decision.

Mark Gardner, whom we mentioned earlier, like *all* professionals, asks a lot of fact-finding and closing questions. Here are a few which are self-explanatory:

Question: "Are you investing in the stock market at the present time?"

Question: "Are you seeking capital gains or income?"

Question: "Could you give me a measure of the degree of risk you wish to take? Are you aggressive or conservative?"

Question: "What does your portfolio consist of?"

1. Biggest winner
2. Largest position

Question: "Please, if you will, give me an example of your last transaction? And when?"

Question: "Usually we are looking for commitments anywhere from _____ dollars to _____ dollars. How much capital do you normally commit?"

"Mr. Prospect, I would like to make an agreement with you as one businessman to another. *First*, I'm not going to waste your time. *Second*, when we come back to you it will be with a major strategic suggestion. For these reasons we want you to give it serious consideration for a major commitment. Now, Mr. Prospect, given all these parameters of the investment, would you be in a position to make a prompt decision?"

This series leads directly to a close:

"Of the stocks you own, do you have any that have not lived up to your expectations? How long have you held the stock? I know I am asking you to make a very difficult decision. Why have you not sold this when it hasn't performed? Why? Because:

1. There is a loss involved.
2. A common mistake by most investors is that you *hope* the stock will somehow come back.

"Wouldn't you agree with this?

"In the real world, not every situation we invest in works out. Isn't it best that we recognize it hasn't worked out, for whatever reasons, and make the decision to rectify this situation by moving out of _____ and positioning into _____?"

These Questions Close Sales

The late Charles Roth, describing how a leasing agent for swanky offices in New York City handled the question-assumption approach, gave this example. The salesperson would take the prospect to a beautiful view of the Hudson River and ask, "You love this view, don't you?" The prospect would invariably answer, "Yes, it's beautiful." Then the salesperson would lead them to a suite on the other side of the building and ask the question, "Do you like this view as well as the other?" The prospect either did or didn't. Assuming they didn't, the salesperson would say, "Then the other suite is the one you want, isn't it?" And the sale was often closed.

The "Choice" Close

When I was in the table-appointments business, selling single girls china, flatware, and crystal, one of our most difficult and important tasks was to lead the girl in the selection of the right pattern and yet make certain it was *her* choice.

We started with china, and since we had seven patterns, we handled it this way: The first pattern we offered was one we knew she would like, a "safe" pattern. Whether she necessarily loved it or not was another matter. After we'd displayed and "romanced" it, we reached for the second pattern and demonstrated it. After showing the second one we asked the girl, "Mary, if these were the only two china patterns in the whole world and you had to make your choice right now as to which one you were going to choose, which one of these two would you choose?"

After she made her choice we put the other pattern away.

We followed this procedure through to the last pattern, and in most cases the final choice was relatively easy. As she chose that final pattern we gave her one more choice as the close: "Mary, would you want this in the five-piece or the seven-piece place settings?" When we got the answer we proceeded to fill out the order.

Years ago, when my friend Mike Ingram was president of Tufts & Son out of Oklahoma City, I laughingly referred to him as "America's Number One Rat Bait Salesman," because he was. Mike and his company used a number of ideas to promote rat bait sales, but one of the things they promoted with their dealers was a .22 rifle. Mike had trained his people to close the sale after explaining the promotion with this question: "Did you want the six-case promotion or would you prefer the one with nine cases and get this beautiful .22 rifle as the promotional gift?" By using this promotional procedure, Tufts & Son broke every sales record in history selling—that's right—rat bait!

Question: "Did you want this single light globe, or would you like three for the 15 percent discount?" In many cases you can move the customer to a larger order by simply asking that or a similar question. The entire questioning process is an involvement procedure, and as Harry Overstreet so eloquently expressed it, *"The very essence of all power to influence lies in getting the other person to participate."* Get 'em involved—your chances of the sale dramatically improve.

Question: "If I show you something that could save you or your firm a great deal of money, are you in a position to act on it now?"

Incidentally, one question you *don't* ask a prospect is, "What do you think about this?" As I said earlier, the "thinking" brain is only 10 percent as large as the "feeling" brain and people generally do not buy logically. They buy emotionally. They buy what they want and not necessarily what

they need. Ask, “How do you *feel* about this?” and you’ve got an infinitely better chance to make the sale.

The “Tie Down” Close Revisited

The late Doug Edwards perfected and taught the following technique, which he called the “Tie Down.” He used it with great effectiveness. Frequently a customer will ask a question such as, “Does this come in green?” If you say yes, you still are no closer to the sale. If they ask, “Does this come in green?” you ask them a question: “Do you want it if it comes in green?” When they respond to that question—they’re bought. You nail it down with, “We can have it for you in three weeks, or would you prefer that I put a rush on it so you can have it in just two weeks?”

If they ask you, “Do the draperies come with the house?” you ask, “Do you want it if the draperies come with the house?” Or “Will you take it if I can make arrangements for the draperies to come with the house?” You’re tying them down with that question. Doug would automatically or instinctively end his questions or statements with a tie-down such as: “This is beautiful in red, *isn’t it?*” “The added weight gives much greater comfort, *doesn’t it?*” “The extra horsepower is a real bonus, *isn’t it?*” “This extra economy will steamroll the competition, *won’t it?*” “The additional color gives it an added dimension, *doesn’t it?*” “This evening view should give you a lot of beautiful memories, *shouldn’t it?*” Each tie-down is emotionally committing the prospect to taking action on your offer, and when you wrap your offer in an obligating question, the sale is more probable than possible. (Your next reading of *Secrets* will make you even more aware of the tie-downs I’ve used throughout the book, won’t it?)

Of special importance in the tie-down procedure is the fact that you should use contractions to emphasize certain points. Sales trainer Phil Lynch said you should avoid the use of *not* at all costs. Use *isn’t, shouldn’t, wouldn’t, can’t, couldn’t, doesn’t, won’t,* etc.

Now you go to work and start developing specific questions for your product and customers. Remember: The *professional* salesperson *works* at learning how to be more professional. It is not easy—but the emotional satisfaction *and* financial rewards are enormous.

The “Permanent Customer” Close

If you sell in a furniture store, a clothing store, or any kind of retail outlet where customers come in and say, “I’d like to see a suit,” you smile and say, “With pleasure; men’s suits are over here.” Start in that direction, take about a half-dozen steps, turn, and say, “It will be helpful if I know whether this suit is for a special occasion, or would you like for it to blend with the rest of your wardrobe so that you can get maximum mileage out of your clothing dollars?”

This approach not only helps you make the immediate sale, but it also plants the suggestion that you are capable of and interested in helping them solve any future wardrobe problems. You are displaying a strong professional approach and a sincere interest in being a problem solver. Your initial question is the opening to the “Permanent Customer” Close.

An almost identical approach is effective in most retail outlets (furniture stores, specialty shops, general merchandisers, etc.). In a furniture store the prospect might come in and express an interest in a lamp, rug, or sofa. You smile and say, “I’ll be pleased to help you; they are right over here.” You start in that direction as you say, “By the way, did you want this as an individual item or did you want it to blend with the rest of your décor so you get maximum mileage from your furniture dollars?” This procedure leads your prospect to make a decision of more significance than just the momentary one of buying the particular item they asked about.

I deal with and use questions in every segment of *Secrets of Closing the Sale.* There is no doubt in my mind that *your career as a salesperson will move forward faster as a direct result of learning how to ask questions and how to use the proper voice inflection than from any other skills you might develop.*

Most salespeople know the importance of asking questions, but too many of them make a couple of serious mistakes in the questioning process. First of all, they take the “police investigator” approach and are a little too aggressive and assertive. The salesperson’s attitude is critical. They must remember the service attitude is the one to take. They should never ask the first question without getting permission. You get permission this way: “Mr. Prospect, in order for me to determine how we might be able to help you, I need to ask you a few questions. Do you mind if I ask them now?” This

procedure not only gets the positive response, but it also tells the prospect *why* you are going to ask the questions. This clears the way for asking the questions and subconsciously obligates the prospect to answer them.

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For Direct Sales People

This chapter is primarily aimed at those who are in the world of direct selling. However, I encourage you, regardless of what you do or sell, to read these next few pages at least once, because the odds are good you will get some ideas or techniques which you can adapt to fit your specific situation.

Know What to Do—Do What You Know

Many years ago, so the story goes, a fox and a rabbit were having a "cool one" in the local pub. Talk turned to their common enemy, the hounds of the local hunters. The fox rather boastfully stated he held no fear of them because he had so many means of escape. He pointed out that if the hounds should come, he could bolt up into the attic and hide until the danger was safely past, or quick as a flash he could run out the door and no hound alive could catch him. He could head for the nearest stream and run in it for a spell until the hounds completely lost track of him. He could even go in circles and backtrack a few times and so completely confuse the hounds that he could then climb a tree and watch them in their quandary as they sought to find where he was. Yes, his methods were many and his confidence was high.

On the other hand, the rabbit rather timidly and with some embarrassment confessed that if the hounds should come, he knew only one thing to do, and that was to run like a "scared rabbit."

As he said those words, they heard the baying of the hounds. The rabbit, true to his word, hopped up and ran out the door like a scared rabbit. The fox hesitated as he debated whether or not to bolt up into the attic and hide,

dart out the door and depend on his speed to get away, head for the stream and lose the scent in the water, or take off and confuse the hounds with backtracking and circling before he climbed the tree. As he debated which method to use, the hounds rushed in and ate him.

The moral to the story is fairly simple. It's better to use one effective procedure or close if that's all you know than it is to know *all* the techniques in this book and not use any of them.

Secrets of Closing the Sale includes an extremely large number of closes and procedures for several reasons. For one thing, people who sell—and the products they sell—come from all over the board. Every conceivable kind of person with every imaginable personality sells an incredible assortment of goods and services. Obviously, I can't deal with all of them, but the techniques and principles covered in this book are quite broad in scope and yet specific in objective. Much of what I have written is designed to help salespeople from all walks of life be more professional and successful. Many different approaches are taken because there are many, many different kinds of salespeople selling to an even wider range of prospects.

One thing you have probably noticed is that most of the closes and procedures used in *Secrets of Closing the Sale* are educational. Remember, the prospect will generally say no when they don't know enough to say yes, so we need to give additional information containing reasons and excuses (logical or emotional) as to why the prospect should, in their own interests, say yes. In the process we need to remember, as Gerard I. Nierenberg said in an interview published in *Personal Selling Power*, "Customers want to learn but they resist being taught."

Here's a Good Old "Oldie"

This particular close is used primarily by direct sales people, but with certain variations it can also be used for automotive, real estate, appliance, or major-purchase items in department and specialty stores. It is to be used *after* value has been established but *before* all the information about your product has been given to the prospect. (Don't spill your popcorn in the lobby before the movie starts.) There are several facets to this close.

To begin with, it is educational since it discloses all the details of the transaction. It's another one of the "oldies" which is old because it's good.

It works. If it didn't work, it would be dead. When I entered the world of selling, it was known as the "Granddaddy" Close. Some sales trainers refer to it as the "Order Book" Close, while others call it the "Basic" Close.

The close is old, but Gene Montrose, a sales trainer from Portland, Oregon, renamed it the "Disclosure" Close, and as I "disclose" it to you it will be apparent why this is a much better name.

The "Disclosure" Close

Once the value has been established and the salesperson moves into the close, they do it with these words: "Mr. Prospect, as you know, Uncle Sam is now involved in many facets of our lives. Some of his involvements are good and some of them are not so good. One of his laws which I believe is a good one is the requirement that companies must disclose to each buyer all the details of the transaction. This way there can be no hidden costs. Ethical salespeople and companies applaud this particular law.

"Our company, Mr. Prospect, goes the government one step better by requiring *all* the information—not only on every sale but on every offer for sale as well. That way there can be no confusion in anyone's mind as to what we are offering and what the costs are. Also, if you should discuss our offer with one of your neighbors, you will find the offer we make you is identical to the one we make to your neighbor. It will undoubtedly please you to know you're dealing with a company that is fair and open with everyone."

Now if you will reread the last paragraph, you will note I told them we "disclose" all the information concerning our offer to everyone. Translation: "I am now going to write your order."

To the Order Form

"The order which you and I have discussed, Mr. Prospect, is number eighty-seven. [At this point your order form is in plain view and on an appropriate portion you write #87.] The investment for this order is three ninety-nine ninety-five. [I say it that way and I do not put a dollar sign by the figure.

Not earth-shattering, but it is one of those "little" things which make a difference.] Shipping and handling is twenty, which brings us to a total of four nineteen ninety-five. The government charges us for all their good help, so the tax comes to thirty-three fifty-five, for a grand total of four fifty-three fifty."

At this point the prospect will often grow concerned and say, "Now wait a minute, I didn't say I was going to buy anything!" To this or a similar comment you can legitimately respond, "Well, of course not. As I explained, I simply want you to see the exact terms of the offer we're making. Personally, Mr. Prospect, I believe you are the kind of person who would never say either yes or no to anything until you knew what you were saying yes or no to. Isn't that right, Mr. Prospect?"

Here's Voice Inflection Again

It's tough to predict what prospects are going to say unless you're in a training room and role-playing, but generally speaking, they will agree with that premise. You continue by saying, "By the way, Mr. Prospect, *if* [and you really emphasize with strong voice inflection the word *if*] you were to consider this program, would it be more convenient to handle it on our twenty dollars per month investment program, or do you generally handle amounts like this on a sixty-day cash plan?" Wait for them to answer.

In many, many cases he will say, "Well, if—and I did say *if*—I were to buy this, I would put it on the twenty dollars per month program." To this you respond, "Oh, one thing I neglected to mention, Mr. Prospect, is that with this order you're given a choice of the knife sharpener or the floor polisher. [You just moved into the "Alternate of Choice" Close.] Or you can choose between the flatware and the stoneware."

For those companies who do not offer extra merchandise as "buy now" incentives, you still have the "Alternate of Choice." "I neglected to mention this, Mr. Prospect, but this is available either in two-tone brown or solid gray. Which *would* you prefer?" This time the strength of your voice inflection is on the word *would.*

I can personally tell you that in many cases the prospect will say, "Well, if I were going to get it, I would prefer the solid gray." You write the word *gray* on the order form and say to the prospect, "In [and you mildly

emphasize the word *in*] getting this, would it make any difference whether the deposits fell on the first or the fifteenth, or would the twenty-fifth be better?"

Again, right out of the book. I cannot tell you how many times I have had the prospect say, "Well, I don't really suppose it makes a lot of difference, but why don't we make it the twenty-fifth?" At this point, for the first time, I personalize the order by asking, "This *is* Mr. J. J. Johnston, isn't it?" and I proceed to finish writing the order.

The "Minor Decision" Close

There are several factors here. Number one, when you move into the "Alternate of Choice," you are getting the prospect to make a minor decision which often will carry the major decision. Number two, *even if the prospect does not buy at this time, your efforts are still significant because you have now educated them by clarifying the order, the terms, and the options available.*

This is important because the prospect needs this information before they can make an intelligent or even comfortable decision. The clarification process gives the prospect confidence they at least know what they are making their decision to do. Yes, clarification gives confidence.

Also, many times a prospect needs "soaking time." On several occasions I've missed the sale at this point, but later, as I was elaborating on other features, the prospect would come back and ask a question relating to the "Disclosure" Close: "Were those payments for twenty months or eighteen months?" "How long will it take for delivery?" "Suppose I set it up on the monthly program and then elect to pay it off. What's the penalty?" Many times the prospect says no at this stage of the game, but after some "soaking time" and additional information, they make a new *yes* decision.

They're Balancing the Budget

On numerous occasions I have been explaining additional features and the prospect was not hearing a word. They were thinking about other payments

which would soon be finished and then they could handle this new payment. That's one of the reasons the "Disclosure" Close needs to be used fairly soon *after* you have given the prospect enough reasons to justify a purchase. This close clarifies the prospect's thinking and gives them the solid, basic information for making the decision they need to make. It *is not* designed to manipulate anyone into buying something they do not need, does not want, or cannot afford. It *is* effective when dealing with legitimate prospects who are hesitant and need a little gentle persuasion to act in their own best interests.

The "Tennis Racket" Close

I'm confident I am accurate with the statement that every veteran salesperson has completed a presentation to a husband-wife team only to be confronted with this dialogue. Husband: "What do you think, honey?" Wife: "Well, that's entirely up to you." Husband: "No, you'd be the one to use it." Wife: "Yeah, but you'd be the one to pay for it," and he says . . . and she says . . . and he says . . . and back and forth it goes.

When this happens, you can rest assured that one of three situations exists. Number one, both of them want to say yes; number two, neither of them wants to say yes; or number three, one votes yes and one votes no. However, you can be even more certain that neither one of them wants to make the decision. Each one keeps knocking the ball back to the other one's court by saying, "You make the decision."

Since they are knocking the ball back and forth across the net, we call this one the "Tennis Racket" Close. It's important you understand that if you just sit on the sidelines and watch the "game" and permit them to knock that ball across the net more than a couple of times, one of them (and most of the time it's the husband) will smile and say, "I know we're going to buy your product, but unfortunately, *she* can't make up *her* mind."

Handle It This Way

Here's how you avoid that situation. After the couple has knocked that decision ball back and forth across the net a couple of times, hold up your hand and say, "'Scuse me." (In some sections of the country where people have peculiar accents, they might say "Ex-cuse me," but that is wrong. Yes, for those of you who take everything literally, my tongue *is* in my cheek!) "Maybe I should not say this, but I will. At this point I do not think that either of you folks should make the decision. Now before you think I'm presumptuous, let me explain. At the moment both of you are emotionally involved, and that is the worst possible time to make decisions.

"The reason is simple. If you say yes, sometime later one of you might well say, 'Well, I tried to get you not to buy that thing!' If you say no, sometime later one of you might say, 'If you remember, I tried to get you to go ahead.' Regardless of whether you say yes or no, because of the emotional involvement it could be the wrong decision."

The "Ben Franklin" Close

I include this close in the chapter primarily designed for direct sales people, but to be candid I cannot think of a single sales situation—and very few situations in life—in which this approach would not be practical. I challenge you to put your imagination to work on this one and use it in your life. When you are choosing a house, car, job, school, vacation site, church, or anything else, this approach can be extremely helpful. With this lead-in, do I need to remind you that your prospect will also find it helpful in making the right decision? I have no idea where this close was born or who originated it, but my friend Bill Cranford taught it to me in 1947. Now on with the close.

"Instead of handling the decision emotionally, let me suggest we borrow a page from the life of one of the wisest men our country ever produced. His name was Benjamin Franklin. When he was confronted with a difficult decision, he would take a sheet of paper and draw a line down the center. On the left-hand side he wrote 'Reasons For,' and on the right-hand side he wrote 'Ideas Opposed.'" (This was altered slightly by the late Percy Whiting, author of *The Five Great Rules of Selling*.)

“What I suggest, Mr. and Mrs. Prospect, is that we follow the same procedure, which in its simplest form is to look at the facts for and against the purchase and then let the *facts* make the decision. By following that procedure, folks, *neither* one of you can be wrong and, regardless of what you decide, you *both* will be right. Does that idea appeal to you, Mr. and Mrs. Prospect?” (You can depend on it—it does!)

Here’s Why You Should Go Ahead

At this point you take your talking pad and draw a line down the middle and print “Reasons For” on the top left side and “Ideas Opposed” on the top right side. “There are many reasons you should go ahead.”

You say, “Number one, *you like it.*” However, you don’t number the reasons for or against the purchase until you sum them up. You do not number the “Reasons For” because it provokes a numbers contest between “Reasons For” and “Ideas Opposed.” The prospect might construe this as a challenge to try to come up with more reasons against. Some of the “Ideas Opposed” could be utterly ridiculous, but their very mention creates a ludicrous and therefore potentially losing situation, regardless of which side has the largest number of reasons.

You make “You like it” number one because people buy what they want —not necessarily what they need. “Number two [remember, you say “number two,” but you don’t write the number], you stated you feel our product will *save money*.” Continue this process as you list all the reasons *for* buying.

Now you go to the “Ideas Opposed.” You start this list by saying, “One of the reasons you should not buy today is . . .” Now you list the major objection they have harped on during the presentation. You need to bring out the dominant reason or objection they have been giving you. If you don’t, they will—and it removes some of the sting if *you* bring it out. Then you keep quiet and let your prospect list the other reasons why not. If you’ve done your job, you will have far more *yes* reasons than they will have *no* reasons.

You Assume the Sale

Now you add the totals as you say, “Let’s see, that’s one, two, three,” etc. Write the number in a large, bold figure (let’s say it’s ten) and circle it several times. “The ‘Ideas Opposed’ are one, two, three,” etc. Write the number for the total (let’s say it’s seven) and circle it several times. At that point, according to Percy Whiting, you turn the pad toward the prospect and ask, “Mr. and Mrs. Prospect, which of these weighs heaviest? The ‘Reasons For’ going ahead or the ‘Ideas Opposed’?” (Let them answer.)

At this point, as the late Charlie Cullen would say, you add a little audacity as you look up from your talking pad and into your prospect’s eyes, stick out your hand, and say, “You know, Mr. and Mrs. Prospect, if all the people I deal with used such a logical, commonsense approach to making decisions, my business would be even more fun than it is! You’re going to love this product!”

Many times salespeople ask, “Zig, does that kind of stuff really work?” The answer is, “No, not all the time. But it will work *some* of the time.” That’s the prime reason the presentation or conviction part of the sales process should start with the strongest benefit and end with the second-strongest benefit. This is important because the prospect is more likely to remember what you said and did as you opened and closed your presentation.

A couple of pertinent observations are in order. Number one, the prospect can come up with just one reason why not and still say, “I’m not going to get it; I don’t care how many reasons ‘for’ you’ve got!” Number two, prospects don’t buy anything for ten reasons. In most cases, they buy for one major reason and one minor reason.

This Sells the Kinfolk, Too

The reason you make the list is so the prospect can see the logic of the concept. This could have a bearing. Also, many times when people buy they need reinforcement, so when they discuss their purchase with husbands, wives, relatives, friends, etc., they have some additional facts to give them. Many people happily buy and then later cancel because their acquaintances either kid or ridicule them for having made what they consider a poor

decision. This process of listing these reasons in this “Ben Franklin” Close not only helps to make the sale but many times helps to keep the sale.

Because of this I encourage you to follow the process. Later I cover what I call “emotional logic” and will give you more of the reasons why I strongly encourage you to use it.

Every close should be an educational process, and although this one does not give any new reasons for buying, it does sum up the ones previously covered. This helps to reassure the prospect and give them added confidence that their new decision (in the event they earlier had said no) is the right decision.

There are two other important factors. First, a prospect can be given all the facts concerning goods, products, or services and still miss the major point. Second, a prospect can get all the facts and still make the wrong decision. The “Ben Franklin” Close helps to make certain the prospect doesn’t miss the major point, and the summation process further reduces the chances of the prospect making the wrong decision.

The “Hat in Hand” Close

Many times in the sales world, try as you might, you will be unable to “smoke out” the real reason the prospect is not buying. It’s frustrating to sense the presence of a sale and yet miss it because the prospect won’t level with you. There is obviously a limit as to how far you can go with a prospect before you not only cause them not to buy but permanently lose any chance of having them as a future customer. When it becomes obvious that you are backing up and your probing, persistence, and questioning approach is not producing results, the “Hat in Hand” approach has been known to work. I learned the basic procedure from Bill Cranford, my first sales trainer. Later, Doug Edwards and Dick Gardner added the refining touches. Here’s the way it works.

When it is clear you have missed the sale, you “fold your tent” by putting your samples or your papers into your briefcase. In yesteryear all salespeople wore hats, so the name “Hat in Hand” Close was born in those days. Today some sales trainers call it the “Lost Sale” Close. As you pack your papers, giving every indication of leaving, you express your

appreciation to the prospect for their time and express the hope that at some future date you will be able to do business with them. You get up to leave and as you head for the door, you turn to the prospect and say, “Mr. Prospect, I’m embarrassed to ask you this, but it would mean a lot to my career if you would help me by answering a question.” An amazing number of people are willing to help and will indicate this willingness. You then say, “Obviously, you have not done any business with us today and that’s all right. I certainly don’t sell everybody. I had hoped you would buy because I thought our product fit your needs. However, you have chosen not to buy and I feel badly about it because I did not explain it thoroughly enough to make the benefits more obvious. It would really be helpful to me, as I call on other people, if you would identify the mistakes I made and where I dropped the ball as a salesperson.”

You will get an amazing number of answers, but in most cases they will say, “It wasn’t your fault at all. We didn’t buy because . . .” and at this point they will bring up the real reason. When this happens, you clap your hands or snap your fingers and say, “Oh, boy! Did I ever blow it! No wonder you hesitated to act until now! Had I been in your shoes, I would have done exactly the same thing. How could I have made such a mistake?”

You quickly open your briefcase, give them the answer to the objection, and close by asking if this makes the difference in their decision. This doesn’t happen often, but from personal experience I can tell you there is the occasional sale which can be gained with this method. When it happens, it’s a total bonus because it was a sale which, for all practical purposes, had been completely lost.

Two things I emphasize: First, make it extremely brief, and if you don’t *immediately* get the order, it’s time to graciously make your departure. Second point: If you *truly believe* you and your product can serve the prospect, then you really are acting in their best interests. This procedure requires a degree of audacity or boldness, but *one way to be an “old” salesperson instead of an “ex” salesperson is to be a bold salesperson*.

Suppose the Prospect Says Nothing

From time to time a sales situation arises which can be frustrating and difficult. The salesperson asks an obligating question and the prospect says

absolutely nothing. It might have happened to you, and if it hasn't, I can assure you that your day is coming.

After asking the obligating question, you sit there and say nothing. They sit there and say nothing. In short, nobody says anything. Years ago there was a school of thought which taught that the one who spoke first was going to lose. Fifteen or twenty years ago that might have been true, but today, with one exception, which I cover in chapter 36, that is generally not true. Here's why: The buyers of today are more knowledgeable and sophisticated and the *ask-the-obligating-question-and-keep-your-mouth-shut* approach has been around so long that many prospects are aware of it. There is also a good chance the prospect wasn't listening or didn't clearly understand the question. They might have been thinking about other things and suddenly realized you were quiet and wondered why. Another reason this approach may not be sound is that the prospect might feel you are using pressure, resent it, and decide to "wait you out." That could be time-consuming.

The "Mother" Close

Here is a better approach. When you ask the obligating question and get no response, wait a reasonable length of time. How long is that? I have no idea, because it will vary. Experience and your commonsense feeling will dictate the length of time, but it will generally be from ten to sixty seconds. However, I can tell you this: When you see the red start up the prospect's neck, before it gets to their earlobes it's time for you to say something. Look them in the eye, smile, and say, "Mr. Prospect, when I was a little fellow [or a little girl], my mother told me silence gave consent. Mr. Prospect, do you think my mother was telling me the truth?"

This breaks the silence and puts the ball back in the prospect's court. The question is, what is the prospect going to do? I don't think they will say, "No, your mother was a liar!" You might wonder if this is "pressure selling." Could be—but its primary purpose is to help the prospect put pressure on themselves. The next story will be helpful in further clarifying the point while teaching you how to get permission from the prospect to help them apply that pressure to themselves.

The Chuck Adkins Story

From time to time, despite our preconceived ideas, pet formulas, and set approaches, along comes an individual who upsets all our theories and ideas. Chuck Adkins was such a man. Chuck didn't "look like" a salesman. Twenty minutes after he shaved, he looked like he needed to shave again. He was not a fat man, but he had an extremely large stomach which hung well over his belt. He wore loafers which had never seen the soft side of a brush or shine cloth. To steal a line from the old Pepsodent toothpaste commercial, you didn't "wonder where the yellow went" when you saw Chuck smile.

He should never have been hired, because he didn't have a car and he didn't "fit" with the rest of the salespeople. However, he did have a bicycle and the six-dollar bond fee. Considerably more important, hiring Chuck represented a promotion for an ambitious young dealer.

The rules were clear that dealers had to have five people in production to qualify for the promotion, and the young man who hired Chuck had four and needed only one more. Chuck was given a contract with the full expectation that he would be in and out of the business in about three days. However, Chuck fooled us all. Not only did he stay but in short order he was the leader among the five. Then he quickly became the leader in the entire area, then number one in the state, number one in the entire South, and number seven in the nation.

Despite his physical appearance (actually, he "cleaned up" pretty good), Chuck was a hard worker and had this "difficult to put your finger on" quality called "charm." I watched the growth of Chuck strictly through the reports and through phone conversations with his manager. When he took over as the number one man in the South, I decided it was time to go see what he was doing. By then Chuck had moved to Georgetown, South Carolina, and was working for a dealership promotion himself.

I arrived in Georgetown bright and early Monday morning so I could watch him handle all phases of the business. I observed how he booked demonstrations. I observed him putting on a demonstration, and I watched him closing sales. I tell Chuck's story because there are three lessons which will help all of us be more productive in our chosen field. I'll get to those lessons in a moment.

Never will I forget the demonstration I viewed that evening. Chuck and his helper cooked a full-demonstration meal for several couples. Personally, I was embarrassed to be there. Never have I seen such a messy, sloppy demonstration. I was delighted that I did not have to eat any of the food. Nevertheless, the couples seemed to enjoy themselves, and Chuck did a good job of getting his points across. When the demonstration was over, he made appointments with the couples who had been invited, and when they had made their departure, Chuck sat down to close the sale with the host and hostess.

On the surface, Chuck was friendly, jovial, easygoing, and apparently even lackadaisical in his approach to life in general and business in particular. However, when it came time to close the sale, Chuck went straight for the jugular. I was really amazed that I had worked with the man all day and had not seen even a hint of this "killer instinct" which leaped to the surface. He really sat on the host and hostess and in the process threw common sense and judgment out the window. As a net result, after a few minutes the host almost literally exploded as he slapped his hand down on the table, hopped up, and with considerable heat, proceeded to tell Chuck he did not respond to any such "high-pressure tactics," and he would never buy from any high-pressure salesman.

The "Pressure Permission" Close

As I sat there in some amusement, some fright, and some embarrassment, I wondered how Chuck was going to extricate himself from this situation. In my mind there was no way Chuck could do anything other than save his hide. The possibility of a sale was so remote that it was—to my way of thinking—nonexistent.

What happened next was something I'll never forget. Chuck remained as cool as anyone I've ever seen in my life. He simply sat there with a stunned look on his face. Then he slowly shook his head from side to side. Halfway talking to himself and halfway talking to me and the prospect, he said, "Mr. Prospect, I wouldn't have had this happen for anything in the world! I am terribly, terribly embarrassed. Mr. Zig [that's what he called me] is my boss, and I'm afraid he's going to think that I am a high-pressure salesman like

you say I am. Actually, Mr. Prospect, I hate high-pressure salesmen worse than you do, and if you thought I was using pressure on you, I don't blame you a bit for getting upset. I would have done exactly the same thing. I especially hate it because here I am, a guest in your home, and you were kind enough to invite in your friends and neighbors to see a demonstration as a favor to me, so I am just terribly, terribly sorry and embarrassed about the whole thing. I don't in the least blame you for getting upset, because if I thought somebody was using high pressure on me, I would get upset, too."

This little speech probably took about two minutes, but Chuck's calm manner and sincerity—combined with the fact that he had kept his seat—worked miracles on the prospect. After a moment or two, he sat back down and Chuck asked, "Mr. Prospect, will you accept my apology, and can we still be friends?" With that, the old farmer smiled and said, "Well, I don't guess there's any harm done," and with that Chuck extended his hand and the two men shook on the friendship agreement.

What happened next is one of those things which you see and hear—and please believe me when I say I was *all* eyes and ears—but even after you see it and hear it, you ask yourself, "Did I really see and hear what I saw and heard?" At this point Chuck said, "Mr. Prospect, I guess I just got carried away, but would you mind if I asked you a question?" Prospect: "No, go ahead." Chuck: "Mr. Prospect, if I saw that you were about to make a mistake which would cost you money and cause your wife to do a lot of extra and unnecessary work, would you appreciate it if I told you about it or would you just figure it was none of my business?" Prospect: "If you saw me about to make a serious financial mistake that would also cause my wife to do extra work, I'd want you to let me know about it."

At that point Chuck gave him the big ol' Pepsodent grin and, with the innocence of a newborn babe, said, "Well, Mr. Prospect, that's exactly what I was trying to do—and you got upset with me. Now I'm willing to try it one more time if you'll promise me you won't get upset with me." To my utter astonishment, the man promised to keep his cool and Chuck proceeded to close that sale.

In reflecting on the situation, Chuck Adkins, this man who was functionally illiterate, had taught me an important sales lesson. He had literally asked for permission to apply pressure to the prospect—and the prospect had willingly granted that permission. It worked. Chuck made the sale.

The second great lesson I learned from Chuck Adkins was the importance of positive expectancy when you deal with *every* prospect. As I've indicated, Chuck's education was limited. He could fill out an order if the customer gave the standard order with standard payments. If the customer substituted a coffeemaker for a juicer, bought an extra utility pan, changed the payments in any way, or made any other changes which were not precisely detailed in the chart, then Chuck was lost. Fully one-third of the orders Chuck sent us did not have a total as far as the size of the sale was concerned. Chuck handled those orders this way.

"Mr. Prospect, I don't know exactly what your total is, but it's about $_____, so just go ahead and give me forty dollars as the deposit and Mr. Zig will figure out the exact amount of the order." Incredibly enough, virtually no one ever argued with or questioned Chuck. They gave him the money and Chuck wrote the order because Chuck *expected* the customer to give him the order.

The third great lesson Chuck taught me was that *all* of us can learn valuable lessons and techniques from some unlikely people. The fact that Chuck taught how to get permission to use a little pressure does not mean that Chuck knew *more* about selling than you and I know. It does mean that Chuck knew at least *one* technique which was new to me.

Message: Learn whenever and wherever lessons are being taught.

PART 6

The Keys in Closing

Objectives

To sell you a philosophy as it specifically relates to the world of selling and to give you the keys in closing or persuading.

To share additional ideas, methods, techniques, and procedures that will increase your sales effectiveness on a daily basis and enhance your career for a lifetime.

Closes and/or Procedures

The “Sure Sale” Close
The “Neiman-Marcus” Close
The “Assumptive” Close Revisited
The “Kreepy Krauly” Close
The “Smell Good” Close
The “Proper Dress” Close
The “Look and Listen” Close
The “Enthusiasm” Close
The “Presidential” Close
The “Three Question” Close
The “Greatest Salesman” Close
The “Dinner Out” Close
The “Hep ’Em Git It” Close
The “Impending Event” Close
The “Pressure Belief ” Close

The “I Can Get ’Em” Close
The “I’ll Treat You Right” Close
The “And Then Some” Close
The “Integrity” Close
The “Signature” Close
The “Signature” Close for Recruiting Purposes
The “Narrative” Close

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Four Ideas and the Keys to Sales Success

I start this segment with four ideas which you need to buy.

First idea: There is not now, there never has been, and there never will be an outstanding salesperson, one who climbs to the top, one who breaks the records and sells more than anyone else—there's never been a real sales champion who was "normal." In every single case they are a little bit "warped" in their belief in what they are selling.

It is beyond their wildest imagination how anybody could possibly even remotely entertain the idea of thinking about saying no. Because they feel this strongly about what they sell, by the very force of their convictions, by the depth of their belief, by their enthusiasm, they are able to persuade many people who are not really hot prospects to go ahead and buy.

However, despite all their zeal, enthusiasm, and belief, they inevitably will encounter that stubborn, hardheaded, nonbelieving individual who is still going to say no. When this happens it could create a problem in the mind of the salesperson. Their belief in what they sell is so deep they rationalize that no prospect would say no if they clearly understood and believed the salesperson's claims about the product. They therefore rationalize that the prospect is not saying no to the product—it's too good—but rather the prospect is saying no to the salesperson. In short, with this attitude the salesperson is going to—if they are not careful—feel rejected.

Refusal or Rejection

Second idea: The salesperson must clearly understand the difference between refusal and rejection if they're going to keep their ego intact and be able to sell their product effectively. My son has clearly understood this difference from the time he was about three years old. When he asked for something and I said no, he did not feel rejected. He simply felt his dad had missed the question. He waited two or three minutes and gave me another chance to correct an obvious mistake.

When the prospect says no to you, you should be as nice to them as my son was to me and as your children probably are to you (if you have children). Give them (your prospect) the benefit of the doubt; give them a chance to correct what surely is an obvious mistake. In your mind, when they say no you should definitely feel it is a mistake and proceed from there, giving them a chance to correct that mistake by saying yes.

No "Born" Salespeople

Third idea: You do not have to be a "natural born" salesperson in order to be a good one. As a matter of fact, I've traveled almost all over the world and I've seen that women have given birth to boys and I've seen that they've given birth to girls, but thus far I've never seen that a woman has given birth to a salesperson. Now, I've seen that salesperson die, so if they're not born but they do die, then obviously somewhere between birth and death—by choice and by training—they become what they decide to become, namely, trained professional salespeople.

Message: Don't come up with the "loser's limp" that you are not a "born salesperson." That's true. But you definitely can be trained to sell, and this book is playing a part in that training.

Fourth idea: You must remember who wins in the sales transaction. I covered this in the second chapter. If you recall, I asked if you still had all the money you had earned in the last year of selling. Next I asked if you had prospects who still benefited from something you sold them more than a year ago. The answer was obvious. Hopefully, you recall that you came to the conclusion the prospect was the big winner. When you fully understand and believe the prospect is the big winner, you can close more enthusiastically and forcefully because you understand that the sales

process, when followed with integrity, is something you do *for* someone, not to someone.

Tie Logic and Emotion Together

Seldom is any effective close or procedure going to utilize only one technique or principle. Here's an example that ties emotion and logic together with a "reduction to the ridiculous" procedure.

Remember, when a person brings up a logical objection you answer it emotionally, and when they bring up an emotional objection you answer it logically.

At one time I represented a bicycle company and was responsible for much of the training of their salespeople. A common objection was the price of the bicycle, which was about twenty dollars higher than other bicycles that were approximately equal in quality. This particular company emphatically claimed their bicycle had the finest brakes in the industry.

When the price objection arose, we taught the salespeople to focus on the brakes, explaining their effectiveness, durability, and most of all, their dependability. Frequently the customer still came back to the price objection. At that point we instructed the salespeople to get involved in this dialogue: Salesman: "Mr. Prospect, approximately how long do you think your child will ride this bicycle?" Prospect: "I don't know. Several years; probably five, maybe even longer." Salesman: "OK, let's take five years—and if this bicycle only costs twenty dollars more, that means it's costing you four dollars per year for the best brakes in the industry." (We also taught the salespeople to bring out that familiar little talking pad so the prospect could *see* that the price was four dollars per year.) "Since there are three hundred and sixty-five days in the year, Mr. Prospect, you're talking about little more than a penny per day for the finest brakes available for your child's bicycle."

The salesperson was instructed to pause for several seconds, then quietly say, "If these brakes enabled your child to stop when a car backs out in front of them one time in a five-year span, they would be worth far more than twenty dollars, wouldn't they?" The procedure was effective because the salespeople were absolutely convinced of the truth of the statement—or was it a question? There was logic in the approach that a penny a day was

certainly insignificant, but the emotional impact was even greater. In the prospect's imagination, they could visualize their child *always* being able to stop their bicycle quickly to avoid danger.

The Keys in Selling

There are eleven keys in selling which will make you more professional and help you close more sales. These keys involve attitudes, procedures, and techniques. In some cases all three will be involved, and in *rare* instances none of these will fit you or your situation. If I could think of even one, I'd share it with you.

As we look at the keys in closing, the very first key we're going to look at is what I call the "Key of Positive Projection." I want to emphasize as strongly as I know how that your business is never either good or bad—out there. Your business is either good or bad between your own two ears. In your mind you should have made the sale before you even talk to the prospect. Whether they come in to see you or whether you go out to see them, you've got to understand, you've got to sell them in your mind before you actually physically sell them. The eleven keys in selling are:

1. Positive Projection
2. The Assumptive Attitude
3. Physical Action
4. Enthusiasm
5. The Subordinate Question
6. Listen
7. The Impending Event
8. Persistence
9. Inducement
10. Sincerity
11. The Narrative Event

Just Looking!

If you work in a retail outlet, chances are good you've had a prospect come in and slowly look around, and as you approach them they say, "I'm just looking." The question is, did you believe them when they said they were "just looking"? I hope you did, because that's exactly what they were doing! Just looking.

I didn't realize that fact for a long, long time, but in 1973, Julie, our youngest daughter, graduated from high school. For graduation we had promised her a new automobile, and buying that car was an exciting event.

Now let me confess that I've never sold automobiles, but if you were to ask me to write a description of a super-good automobile prospect, here's the way I would describe that prospect: A daddy with a daughter who had just graduated from high school. He publicly announces he's going to buy her a car and gives some indication he has the money to do it. From where I sit, I'd say that's a pretty good prospect!

Don't Offer Charity

I had been at work when we went down to look at cars, so I was dressed in a business suit. My daughter hadn't been to bed the night before because she had been getting dressed for the big event.

This was to be her first car, and she was all dolled up in her "Sunday go to meetin" best. I was driving a fairly new "Ninety-eight" Oldsmobile, so between the two of us we gave some indication of being at least mildly prosperous. When she got out of our car, Julie wasn't walking—she was floating into that dealership.

Despite that fact, the young salesman came to us and offered charity. He asked, "Can I help you?" Despite his charitable offer, we were in a hurry, so I didn't beat around the bush. I responded, "My daughter just graduated from high school and we're looking for a car for her as a graduation gift." Word of honor, he looked at us and said, "Well, if you see anything you like, let me know," and he turned around and walked away.

I have no idea if the young salesman stayed in the business another day. I do know that regardless of how long he stayed in the business, he never had a better prospect. Like most prospects, we had started with the dealership which sold the cars my daughter was interested in.

The young salesman “blew it.” I thought he was pretty bad until we got to the next dealership. This salesman said exactly the same words, and in addition he had BO. The third dealership was almost as bad, but when we went to the fourth dealership we got lucky.

Yes—They Are “Just” Looking

What do I mean, “we got lucky”? Very simple. My daughter had dated the salesman, so we had a connection with the dealership and were able to buy a car. This helped me to understand two things which I had not previously understood: First, I understood why we were having a recession. We couldn’t get waited on! The second thing I understood was that when a prospect comes in and says, “We’re just looking,” or “I’m just looking,” you can bet your last nickel they are “just looking”—but it’s *desperately* looking! For a salesperson! To sell them something—so they don’t have to keep on looking!

Think as a Buyer and as a Seller

Now let me go back to chapter 9 on empathy and sympathy. You want to hear what the prospect says *and* what he is saying. I want you to think as a seller and as a buyer. When you go shopping, would you rather find what you want in the first store or the tenth store? Odds are about forty-three to one you would much prefer to find what you want in the first store, wouldn’t you? As a seller, the next time somebody comes in to see you and says they’re “just looking,” it should bring a smile instead of a frown. Careful—don’t overreact. Don’t grab and hug—just smile.

If the shopper seems to be shy and introverted, as you smile take a step backward (you *must* come across as nonthreatening and nonpushy) and say, “We’re delighted to have you with us. Look as long as you like. My name is _____, and if you would like some help, it will be a pleasure for me. [And as an afterthought] Oh, and incidentally, if we don’t have *exactly* what you want, I could probably tell you where to find it. *Is that fair enough?*”

If the customer is *obviously* an outgoing, extroverted, hail-fellow-well-met kind of person, you should smile broadly and say, “Congratulations! You have just found someone who is interested in helping you find exactly what you want. If we don’t have it, I’ll suggest the place or person who can solve the problem. *Is that fair enough?*”

“Is that fair enough?” is a very vital question to ask. Our nature is such that we have a wish, even a need, to be fair. The “Is that fair enough?” question will almost always bring a *yes* answer, which means you have just scored your first points in a sales game designed to produce two winners: you and the prospect. To repeat myself, when the prospect says they’re “just looking,” you really ought to be grinning all over.

The “Sure Sale” Close

This next story dramatizes the power of the Key of Positive Projection.

Several years ago a small East Coast printing company started an expansion program. Every six months a new salesperson was hired and started their training in the office with product knowledge and procedure.

Next the new salesperson went into the field with an experienced sales trainer who taught them sales skills and techniques. Finally, the new salesperson got their sales “wings” after an interview with the company president, who gave them that last little pep talk.

On one occasion the company hired a young salesman who was especially green and lacking in self-confidence. As a matter of fact, he was so scared the boss figured he’d better give him a little extra help. After the fairly standard “you can do it” pep talk, he said to the salesman, “Son, I’ll tell you what I’m going to do. I’m going to send you across the street to see a ‘sure sale’ prospect. This is where I always send our new salesmen for one very simple reason—that old boy is a buyer. He always buys something. But, son, let me give you a word of warning. He’s mean, nasty, ornery, and foulmouthed. He’s going to make you think he’s going to bite your head off, chew it up, and spit it out in little bitty pieces.

“Put your mind at ease, son. He’s all bark and no bite. Regardless of what he says, I want you to hang in there and say, ‘Yes, sir, I understand, but I have the finest printing offer in this entire city and this is what you ought to

get.’ It makes no difference what he says, you stand your ground and come back at him. Remember—he *always* gives our new salesmen an order.”

Go Get ’Em, Tiger!

Our charged-up hero crossed the street, walked in the door, introduced himself and his company, and for the next five minutes those were the only words our young salesman had a chance to say. That old boy really tore into him. He told him how the cow ate the cabbage in no uncertain terms. He introduced that young man to a segment of the English language which he had never known existed. However, our hero, because he had been prewarned, hung in there. He said, “Yes, sir, I understand, but this *is* the finest printing offer in this entire city, *this* is what you ought to have.” Back and forth they went and after about thirty minutes he made the biggest sale in the history of the printing company.

Naturally, the young salesman was excited about the order. He picked up his briefcase, made a mad dash across the street, threw the order on the boss’s desk, and said, “You were right about that old man! He is mean, nasty, ornery, and foulmouthed, but I’ll tell you something else about that *nice* old buzzard—our attitude *is* affected when the prospect buys, isn’t it? —he *is* a buyer! I’ve got the biggest order in the history of this company, just look!”

The boss looked at the order in astonishment and said, “Oh, my goodness, son! You called on the wrong man! That old man *is* the meanest, nastiest, orneriest, most foulmouthed old goat we have ever dealt with! We have been trying for over fifteen years to sell him something and he’s never bought a dime’s worth of anything from any of us!”

Make the Sale—in Your Mind

Question: Where did he make the sale? Now I don’t think there’s a doubt in your mind, is there? You *know* the salesman made the sale *in his mind* before he crossed the street. He was using the Key of Positive Projection. All the young man did was go across the street, totally prepared, even willing to take some abuse because he *knew* he was going to make the sale.

Suppose the boss had said, “Now, son, I’m going to send you across the street, but I don’t really know why. I’ve been sending my best people over there for fifteen years and that old buzzard’s been chewing them up and nobody has ever sold him a dime’s worth of anything!” How much chance do you think he would have had to make the sale? None! All I’m saying is that you *must* make the sale in your mind before you ever talk to the prospect. This is true whether you solicit your business on a direct basis or you run a retail business with your customers coming in to see you.

Kevin’s Xponential Insight #17: Preparation Precedes Achievement

A number of years ago there was a well-known businessman I wanted a chance to work with who had recently released a book about the techniques that had made him a success. He was an entrepreneur and I was an entrepreneur. He had a product—a book about how to make money in real estate—and I wanted to develop that product for the infomercial marketplace. Match made in heaven, right? Not so fast. First, I had to prepare for the sale.

The first obstacle I faced on the way to a meeting with this guy was actually getting to him in the first place. Before I could sell to the inner circle, I had to sell to the gatekeeper. In this case, that keeper turned out to the man’s coauthor.

Convincing my target required that I first meet with his coauthor to convince him that my idea would sell more books—and would be a benefit to both of them. Then I had to prepare the coauthor to pitch my idea to my target, to put my foot in the door, so to speak.

Now, once I’d done all of that and got the meeting, I was in this man’s office, we shook hands and were about to sit when he said, “Wait a minute. You’re not gonna sit down in that chair unless you tell me why I should let you sit down in that chair,” which translated to me as, “I’m a successful man whose time is money. Why is listening to your pitch the best way for me to spend it?”

So, I responded, “If you say yes to my pitch, I’m only gonna need four hours of your life, and you can make $4 million. All right?”

He waited just a few moments and then said, “OK, sit down.” That was step number three: getting this guy to allow me to pitch him. And then step four was actually making the pitch of what I wanted to do, which was to take his brilliant real estate ideas to the mass marketplace. He said yes.

So, in all it was four steps: pitch the gatekeeper. Tell the gatekeeper how to pitch your target. Pitch the target on sitting down to listen to you, and then pitch the target with the deal. These four prepped and planned steps ended in a triple win for everyone involved.

If you plan to win and prepare to win, you can always expect to win. Likewise, if you don't prepare, you can't expect the win.

Drill-Practice-Rehearse-Project. Your planning, preparation, and projection *before* you see the prospect will determine, to a large degree, what happens *after* you see the prospect. It's more than just a cliché that *spectacular performance is preceded by unspectacular preparation.* In the classroom a sales wreck (mistake) is an *inexpensive* learning experience. The same wreck (mistake) with a good prospect not only is expensive for the salesperson *and* their company but is discouraging as well. If it is repeated too frequently or over a period of time, it will end the career of the salesman. Physical and mental preparation, complete with drill and rehearsal, will get you technically *and* emotionally ready to sell.

This is practice without pressure. To go with this you need that mental projection of making that sale in your mind before you see the prospect. The beautiful things about mental practice, as Dr. Maxwell Maltz said, is that you gain perfection on the playing field of your mind. You do everything exactly right, respond to every question with the best possible answer, meet every objection in the best possible way, and end up with the sale.

On this playing field of your mind you can develop enormous confidence and courage. If there is anything consistent with all of the supersalespeople in the world, it is that they do have confidence they can succeed. They put this confidence into action with courage.

If you're going to be a successful closer, you've got to mentally see yourself as a closer before you physically close the order. You write the order in your mind when you first get out of bed every morning. You start writing and you continue to write those orders in your mind all day long. The professional salesperson is observing, thinking, selling, and closing all the time. Closing becomes a part of them. They burn it into their subconscious mind. On *every* sales interview they project successful results so that inevitably the end results are a foregone conclusion.

Just in case you think I overstate the importance of making the sale in your mind *before* you see the prospect, let me point out that a study done by Sales and Marketing Executives International (SMEI) revealed that the

number one reason salespeople fail is their tendency to prejudge the prospect and decide in advance that they might not or even will not buy. As I stated earlier, you *should* prejudge the prospect, find them *guilty*, and convict them of buying *before* you see them.

I'm not certain the salesperson in the next story "saw us coming," but based on the way she handled the transaction, I'm convinced she "tries and convicts" every prospect who walks into her department and "sentences" them to buy.

The "Neiman-Marcus" Close

Several years ago the Redhead and I were at a department store doing some Christmas shopping. We rode the escalator to the mezzanine floor, and as we stepped off, we saw a beautiful fur coat on a mannequin. I looked at the fur and at the Redhead. She looked at the fur and at me. Both of us knew without either one of us saying a word that we were looking at *her* coat. We both stopped at the same time to give it a good once-over. I looked at one part of the coat and she looked at another part. I'll bet most of my readers can tell me which part each one us of examined. The Redhead grabbed the sleeve and looked at the price tag. I unbuttoned the coat, looked at the lining, felt the fur, and said, "Sweetheart, this is magnificent." By then she had seen the price and said, "It ought to be!" And with that, she turned around to walk away.

When she turned around she literally bumped into one of the sharpest salesladies I've ever seen anywhere. She was a short, pleasant, grandmotherly type whom you would instantly like and trust. She looked right at my wife and with a twinkle in her eye said, "Honey, that is a beautiful coat, isn't it?" Sugar Baby: "It ought to be!" Saleslady: "Well, you apparently only looked at the price tag. Let me show you what you should have looked at." Very quickly she took physical action (I cover the Physical Action Key in selling in chapter 33) as she opened the coat and said, "Look at the Eliot label. When you see that name, especially when combined with our reputation, it means quality and satisfaction. This coat will be with you a long time, and it will be beautiful and practical every day you wear it." Then smoothly and easily she slipped the coat off the mannequin as she

said, “Let’s try it on, just for size.” Now she is physically getting my wife completely involved.

The Redhead (protesting ever so mildly) slipped the coat on and the saleslady asked, “How does it feel?” Sugar Baby: “Well, it feels good, but it *ought* to!” She was still thinking about the price. Then the saleslady did something which was truly beautiful and professional as she said, “Well, honey, what you ought to do [and she didn’t have a pad to talk with in this situation] is take that price tag and divide by ten. You will wear that coat five or six years and then your husband will probably have a clutch cape or jacket made from it and you’ll wear the new garment another five or six years. Actually, you can wear this beautiful fur for less than a cloth coat would cost, since you would have to buy a cloth once every three or four years. And,” she said, “honey, this is quality, and on you it looks natural.” *Love* that word in this situation!

Pressure? Sure—but So Gentle It Felt Good!

Then she looked right at my wife and then at me. As she took her eyes off my wife to look at me, she glanced back and caught my wife gently stroking the fur. When she saw this she broke out in the biggest grin you’ve ever seen. She knew, and she knew that she knew, she had the sale. Despite her verbal protests, my wife’s body language—which *cannot* lie—had revealed her true feelings.

The saleslady looked back at my wife and said, “You know, honey, you’re one of the lucky ones. There are an amazing number of wives who come in here and drool over a coat like this. Unfortunately, their husbands are not cut from the same cloth as yours [I hadn’t said a word, but apparently my body language had also given me away] and are unwilling to get something this nice for their wives.”

Guess who left with a coat? That’s exactly right! That dear lady had put me on such a high pedestal I just couldn’t let her down, could I? It wasn’t too hard to convince the Redhead that she should “let me get it for her.”

Does It Work?

Even though the entire transaction lasted less than five minutes, there were several important principles involved.

Number one, the salesperson was alert, on her toes, and in love with her job. She observed the little twenty-second drama that took place as my Redhead looked at the price and I looked at the fur. She might have heard me comment on the coat, but I can't definitely state that she did.

Number two, she immediately got my wife physically involved (she saw that I was sold, so she figured it was one down, one to go!). Number three, she knew my wife really wanted the coat but apparently didn't feel it was practical. Number four, she broke the cost down on a "reduction to the ridiculous" approach so both of us could see it was practical and affordable.

She gave us a reason to buy (it was practical) and an excuse to buy (the Redhead really did want the coat). One more time. Any time you can give a prospect an excuse *and* a reason for buying, and make it easy for them to buy, the odds are great the sale is yours for the asking.

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Selling and Courting Run Parallel Paths

The second key in closing the sale is the "Key of the Assumptive Attitude." As a starting point for this key, let me suggest that selling and courting run parallel paths. For the ladies who read this, I apologize in advance because this analogy won't have as much value to you as it will have for the guys. Actually, you are the ones who could write the book on this particular subject. But, fellows, let me urge you to stay tuned in because I honestly believe this will have considerable value for you.

I'm convinced that if you know anything at all about courting, you already know a great deal about selling. Question for the guys: When you were single and courting (or if you still are), did you ever ask your date, "Honey, can I hold your hand?" "Do you mind if I put my arm around you?" "Is it all right if I kiss you? Just one time, that's all I want, just one kiss?"

If you did or do court that way, chances are pretty good you are still single. Next question: Did you ever kiss a girl? Chances are good if you are a guy you answered in the affirmative, which means you kissed her without permission.

Question for the distaff side: Did the suitor in the above example kiss you without permission? Yes _____ No _____ Note: In a seminar situation, when I ask this question the girls will invariably respond with a big, laughing *yes.* At that point I playfully call them a bunch of liars and they all laugh.

Actually, in most cases the guy probably had permission to kiss the girl long before he took advantage of it. Chances are even better, however, that

the girl didn't pucker up and say, "OK, partner, now plant it there!" That's not the way it's done!

To tie this courting example directly to the sale of a product or service, I can guarantee you that when you knock on a prospect's door, whether it's their home or office, they're not going to open the door and enthusiastically proclaim, "Oh, thank goodness, you finally got here! I've been waiting for one of your people to come by for years! Come on in! I'll go get my credit card while you start writing the order!" You couldn't pay the light bill on the profits from prospects who "bought" like that.

In Selling and Courting You Assume and Imagine a Lot

Then how does the prospect say yes? Exactly the same way the girl said yes. Fellows, did you ever try to hold hands with a girl and she said, "No!" then a few minutes later you were walking down the street holding hands? What she was saying initially was, "Based on the information you've given me thus far, I can see no justification whatsoever in indulging in a handholding exercise with you."

Obviously, she didn't verbalize that, but that's what she was *saying*. By her actions she was saying, "Now look, Charlie Brown, the night is young. Be patient. Take your time—and SELL!" In selling we can sell more if we transfer what we learn in the world of courting to the world of selling by remembering that in the world of courting and in the world of selling, you do a great deal of assuming *and* imagining.

In courting you *assumed* when you asked the girl for a date she was going to say yes. You *assumed* if you treated her properly on the date, when you got her to the front door you were going to get the good-night kiss. However, you didn't get her to the front door and say, "Honey, I'll tell you what. It's getting late. Why don't I stop by tomorrow afternoon at half-past five on the way home and get my good-night kiss then?"

Here's Why

There are two basic reasons you would not do this: Number one, you are "motivated" by being with your date and you've spent an entire evening

hoping to get her in the same condition. To bid her good night at that point would negate the effort you had expended for that evening. The second reason is *you know* that the next day you would have to start all over. As a matter of fact, after thinking about it overnight, you might be further behind than you were when you started the day before, because your date might have had second thoughts about granting that good-night kiss.

There are a lot of guys and gals in the world of selling who make that mistake in the sales process. After making the full presentation and going through the demonstration, completely establishing value and covering all the sales bases, when the prospect brings up one lousy little objection or excuse, the salesman often panics, backs away, and says, "OK, I'll see you tomorrow or next week or next month."

Let me tell you something, my selling friend. In the world of courting *and* in the world of selling, you *must* assume from the beginning when you approach the prospect they're going to be delighted to talk to you. You *assume* you're going to get the appointment. You *assume* you're going to put on a powerful, professional presentation. You *assume* they've got the money to buy and you *assume* they are going to buy from you *now.* From "hello" to "good-bye," in courting *and* in selling, if you assume a lot you will sell a lot.

You should *see* the prospect signing the order and transferring a portion of their monetary resources to your estate. You should *see* in your own mind the transfer of your goods or services to them. In every step of the sales process you assume and see the desired end results.

You, Too, Girls

And, girls, with few exceptions you were doing the same thing from your side of the fence (on occasion you do go out with a guy because you have no "better" or "other" offer and going out with Charlie Schmo beats watching TV). For the guy who made your pulse beat faster, you did a little subtle maneuvering as to how you could regularly, "accidentally," be at the same place as your dream guy. You carefully planned *exactly* what you would say when he asked you out. Then you visualized what you were going to wear and how you would greet him. You visualized how you would respond when he "accidentally" found his arm around your

shoulders. You visualized how you would plant those subtle little hints and suggestions through all of the little maneuvers you girls learned at the knees of your mothers. Actually, it's a sales process for the boy and the girl, with the girl being more adept because she, from an early age, learned to think as both a buyer *and* a seller.

Just Keep It Up

Question: Now that you're selling products, goods, or services, why don't you follow identically the same procedure? Oh, I understand the prospect will not be quite as cooperative as the girl and will certainly not "plot" to aid you in your sales effort. However, need I remind you if what you sell solves a problem or fills a need for them, then they, like the girl, are just as interested as you are in "getting acquainted" with that solution. If you really believe the sales process is something you do *for* a prospect and not *to* the prospect, and if your sales technique is as sound and as carefully planned as your courtship process, then more and more of the prospects will enter into the process I discuss.

Now let's take the courtship process (as in boy/girl) and translate it into the sales process (salesperson/prospect). In the sales process you need to clearly visualize, memorize, drill, and rehearse exactly what you are going to say in the initial approach. You need to visualize the prospect's response. If you are new in selling, the chances are excellent your company has already given you the approach to use and the expected response of the prospect.

In your mind you need to see the prospect responding with, "*Yes*, you can make your presentation." You need to visualize the presentation as you're going to make it as well as the response of the prospect. You need to see them nodding and agreeing that, yes, they do have a problem and, yes, your product will solve that problem. You need to visualize them enthusiastically receiving the good news about the service you can render.

Yes, the sales process—like the courtship process—is a visualization procedure. If you think the sales process through and apply the same enthusiasm, imagination, and visualization that you applied on those first few dates you had, I can assure you your sales results will substantially improve.

Throughout the entire process, whether you are “selling” your date or selling your prospect merchandise, you assume the ultimate end result. That’s easy and natural in the courtship process, but apparently it has to be relearned in the sales process.

Most proposals are not in the form of “Will you marry me?” and most sales are not in response to “Will you give me an order?” The end results are brought about by a far subtler assumptive approach. In courtship the suitor, after he has made his presentation, drops little thoughts like, “When we’re married we won’t have to be in so early,” or “Our children will be so good looking,” or “One of the things I’m going to get you when we’re married is _____.” The list is endless but the phrases are all aimed at the same target. They are assumptive closes.

The “Assumptive” Close Revisited

One of the most effective assumptive closes I’ve ever experienced involved one of my pastors, the venerable Dr. W. A. Criswell.

In late 1981, some members of the church approached me about teaching a particular Sunday school class known as the “Auditorium Class.”

This class was held in the main auditorium between the two Sunday morning sermons. It was a large class and represented a significant commitment on the teacher’s part. I had serious reservations about my qualifications as a Bible teacher.

With this in mind, I expressed my gratitude to the church members for the invitation but also expressed some of my doubts. I told them I would give it careful consideration and would be much in prayer about it. They told me this was the message they would deliver to the pastor.

The next day (I’ve never seen Uncle Sam so efficient) I received a letter from our pastor thanking me for accepting the assignment and expressing his confidence the class would be an outstanding success. That’s the “Assumptive” Close, and in this case it worked to perfection because I wasn’t about to say no to Dr. W. A. Criswell, especially since I really wanted to say yes.

The “Kreepy Krauly” Close

In the summer of 1983, Tom Brickman, an enthusiastic young Kreepy Krauly salesman (you read it right!), came knocking on our door. I was jogging, and as I passed in front of our house, I saw Tom and the Redhead busily engaged in serious conversation, so I aborted my jogging for the day to see what was going on. Tom quickly explained that the Kreepy Krauly was a robot with only one moving part and he was demonstrating its effectiveness in cleaning swimming pools.

A few questions, a little chitchat, and Tom had an appointment to clean our pool. The key to getting the appointment was Tom’s enthusiasm and sincerity, combined with a few well-placed questions: (1) Would I be interested in a device that dramatically reduced algae buildup in my pool while saving up to 50 percent on my pool chemicals? (2) Would I like to have the cleanest pool in the neighborhood and spend less than ten minutes a week in the process? Both questions produced the expected answers.

Tom brought a new Kreepy Krauly, so the assumption was clear that he *expected* to leave it in our pool. He used a dialogue guaranteed to arouse interest (“invented by an engineer from South Africa who grew tired of cleaning his own pool or using ineffective devices”). The engineer part assured the acceptance and credibility. The South Africa part and “just being introduced in the Dallas area” gave it an aura of intrigue and snob appeal. “Tired of cleaning his own pool” rang an empathy bell. I give Tom an *A* for opening effectiveness. Incidentally, he covered these points while he was taking “Kreepy” out of the container.

During the demonstration, Tom talked about Kreepy almost as if it were a person. He explained that we would soon regard Kreepy as a silent, hardworking member of the family (a little corny, but Tom’s infectious grin made it very effective). Throughout the demonstration, Tom was answering questions and showing me exactly what to do to keep Kreepy functioning effectively (*assuming* all the time). The single step that *really* stood out, however, was the way he used the “Assumptive” Close:

Tom: “Best of all, Mr. Ziglar, we keep a permanent record of the shape and dimensions of your pool so if, for any reason, Kreepy is not keeping *all* of your pool clean, a telephone call to our service department will solve the problem. Now let me make a sketch of the exact size and shape of the pool

so our service department can give you the best possible service" (this is a completely natural assumptive close). He quickly drew a sketch, asking me the dimensions as he drew. When he had finished he asked if it was accurate. I assured him it was. Tom: "Mr. Ziglar, as you can see, Kreepy is doing a thorough job on your pool and this one is new, but I'll be glad to take this one out and put in a brand-new one. Would you like for me to do that?" Zig: "No, this one is fine" (I had bought). Tom: "Do you want to give me a check or do you prefer to put it on a credit card?" (two of the "Alternate of Choice" Closes in succession).

Remember Why They Buy or Give You the Kiss

At this time I'd like to share my own courtship experience with you—up to a point. I learned very early in my courtship career that the girls I was dating were not kissing me for *my* benefit. As soon as I realized they were having fun, too, I started kissing more girls! For what it's worth, I never kissed my wife until *after* we were married. Of course, she wasn't my wife until we got married, was she?

As a salesperson you need to understand that nobody's going to buy from you so you can win a trip to Hawaii (oh, your mother might, but you can't make a career of selling to Mom); nobody's going to buy from you so you'll win the new car; nobody's going to buy from you so you'll be number one. People are going to buy from you because of the benefits to them as a direct result of buying what you're selling. So from "hello" to "good-bye" you assume they're going to buy from you *now*.

The "Smell Good" Close

The third key to help you close more sales is one which I desperately hope you are already using. It's one which I'm embarrassed to mention, but painful experience and observation tell me I must. I'm talking about the "Key of Physical Action." It's the first part of this key I'm embarrassed to talk about.

The Key of Physical Action starts with physical cleanliness. You start every selling day by taking a bath or shower—especially if you're using this new twenty-three-hour deodorant. The company that makes it figures everybody's entitled to some time to themselves! After the bath or shower you use a good deodorant. You need to smell good and you also need to make certain you do not have halitosis. Some people say that halitosis is better than no breath at all, but don't bet the family jewels that the prospect would agree with that!

It's terribly difficult to offend people and influence them at the same time. You should use a mint or some kind of breath freshener about every hour so you do not offend the prospect. Physical action begins with physical cleanliness.

No Bath—No Sale

In 1969 the company I represented and served as vice president was approached by an organization selling executive retreats and seminars. The primary concept was that anyone who qualified to attend was a chief executive officer of a company or earned in excess of a hundred thousand dollars a year. The seminars featured lectures by outstanding people, and each one was structured so there was a considerable amount of free time for these executives to visit with each other for brainstorming and sharing of ideas. The salesman who called on us wore an expensive tailor-made suit, drove a luxury automobile, and wore a large diamond ring. He was persuasive and articulate but he never came close to making the sale. His body odor was so offensive that after a few minutes in a room with him we simply could not tolerate the odor. The interview was terminated in short order and the salesman missed the sale.

I'm not certain we would have bought under ideal circumstances, but we were intrigued with the idea. The salesman never had a chance to make the sale, even though his sales knowledge and basic procedures were excellent. His preapproach was good. He knew something about us. He was professional in his introductory remarks, was enthusiastic about his product, and did many things right. His lack of personal hygiene completely eliminated any chance of the sale.

On the other side of the coin, I have seen some salespeople go to the other extreme. I have been in the company of some who used such an overwhelming amount of an expensive aftershave or cologne that the odor nearly knocked me over. Some of the ladies use entirely too much perfume and/or makeup. Taste and judgment enter the picture. In this case, as in all cases, I'm convinced that most salespeople who are guilty of halitosis, BO, or too much aftershave or perfume are simply careless and unaware of what they're doing. There is no excuse for this. Be aware—and you'll sell more.

P.S. To husbands, wives, or sales managers: if your mate or salesperson is ever guilty of being "odor offensive," you need to *gently* suggest that something be done about it.

The "Proper Dress" Close

Physical action includes how you dress. There are no "set in concrete" instructions on this one. The dress will vary according to the time of year, section of the country, and product or service you sell. You start by dressing within the structure of the industry and part of the country in which you live. Obviously, an individual selling computers, securities, or estate planning would dress differently from the salesman who sells feed and fertilizer on a direct basis to the rural areas of the country.

As a speaker, I follow one rule which makes sense to me: I try to dress so my audience does not notice what I'm wearing. If you leave one of my presentations raving about that "beautiful suit he had on," I believe I have been improperly dressed. If you leave thinking to yourself, *Gee, you would think the guy could do better than that!* then I have been improperly dressed. In my judgment, I should dress so your focus is on my face and what I'm saying rather than on the clothes I'm wearing. That's a pretty good guideline for you. If you are too elaborately dressed or too shabbily dressed, you distract from your presentation. In the case of you ladies, if you are seductively dressed, it's going to cost you as a professional. You will, perhaps, get extra attention, but it will not be the kind that leads to more sales and the building of a sales career.

Get Help—It's Available

Your dress is so critically important I urge you to do two things: First of all, buy a book or find another resource with style suggestions that will help you make sure you're dressing the part well.

Number two, make contact with a professional clothing salesperson in a good clothing store. Get to know them; seek their advice; work with them on a wardrobe concept; make friends with them and encourage them to keep you informed about any style changes or sales which will enable you to dress more professionally.

The old cliché is still true: *You never have but one chance to make a first impression.* You want to make certain that first impression is a good one. It is true you don't judge a book by its cover, but if the cover isn't appealing, you probably won't bother to find out what the book is all about.

If you're selling a legitimate product or service at a legitimate price, you need to concentrate on being dressed so you "blend" rather than "offend." You will also want to remember that *the people you go to for advice* (doctors, attorneys, CPAs, ministers, bankers, financial consultants, etc.) *are generally neatly and conservatively dressed.* As a matter of fact, how would you feel about their credibility if they were wildly or sloppily dressed? Would you take them *or* their advice as seriously? Point: If you want your prospects to take your advice ("Buy my product"), you should dress as an advisor.

You have probably noticed that on several different occasions I have suggested you "look your prospect in the eye." You can't do this very effectively if you are wearing dark glasses. The statement "I don't trust a man who won't look me in the eye" has been ingrained in most of us. With our ever-increasing drinking and drug problems, the average person wants to see "the whites of the eyes" of any salesperson who is trying to persuade them to take action and buy something. On unusually bright days, tinted glasses are fine while you are outside a building with your prospect, but once you sit down at the negotiating table, those glasses *must* come off if you are to be most effective.

In Gold and Selling, Position Is Important

Physical action, according to sales consultant Donald Moine, includes establishing trust by reflecting the customer's personality. If the customer talks fast, the salesman will increase their own conversational speed. If they talk in a whisper, the salesman's voice will quickly drop to a whisper. "His voice and manner say, 'I'm like you. You're safe. You can trust me,'" says Moine.

Physical action also means being physically in *position* to sell. If you're selling a high-ticket item, if it's humanly possible to have your prospect seated, then by all means do so. Psychologically, your prospect will be more comfortable making a decision when they're seated than when they're standing. When the decision involves a substantial sum of money, you want everything going for you.

Physical action means having the right seating arrangement. For example, if you (the salesperson) are calling on a husband and wife, you should be *next to the wife* or in front of both of them. Every time you speak to the husband, you should have to look past the wife or at the wife in the process. Now if it's true the husband is the head of the family, it's just as true the wife is the neck. Since the neck is what turns the head, you want to make certain she is in a position to turn it properly.

This procedure has another advantage. By including the wife in the complete presentation, you are covering one more sales base. On many occasions a salesperson will have a tendency to do most of the talking to the team member who is giving them the responses they want and need. Generally speaking, this is the one who is most enthusiastic and who is agreeing more with the salesperson. The problem with this procedure is many times this "agreeing" prospect has little or nothing to do with the decision. By including both husband and wife in the presentation, as this physical action step will do, you are touching one more sales base which gives you a better chance of making the sale, which I repeat is the purpose of the call.

Those Jealous Hearts

In a sales presentation, a male salesperson should be careful not to get too close to the prospect's wife. He might be a jealous man, and if you either deliberately or accidentally touch the wife, the prospect might think you're

trying to sell something other than merchandise. I can guarantee you under those circumstances you're not going to sell him anything.

Incidentally, age does not enter the picture in this particular situation. Whether the wife is twenty-five or seventy-five makes little or no difference to a jealous husband. The one exception to this might be the man who is married to a wife much younger than he is. In this case, he would be inclined to be even more protective and more jealous.

The same advice goes to ladies. We're in a society that is more open today than ever before, but that does not eliminate the fact there are many women who are protective and very jealous of their husbands. To have a salesperson use their sex appeal to try to persuade the prospect to buy something is not going to endear that person to their spouse. In many cases it will cost you a sale and you'll never know why. All of this simply says use good judgment—be careful of where and how you sit and physically deal with your prospects.

Remember, even if one member of the team, whether it's a business team or a husband-wife team, is a dominating one and is the primary decision maker in most cases, the other member, as sales trainer Don Hutson says, can still veto the sale. Don't take that foolish and unnecessary chance.

When you deal with two or more prospects in an office or at a restaurant, be careful not to sit between them or you will either look, act, and feel like a referee at a tennis match or you will give one prospect more attention than the other. If you are talking to the "boss" in the office and he is hidden behind his desk, it will be difficult to communicate with him, especially if you work with visual aids or a prospectus. In these cases, according to John Hammond, you need to get permission to move a chair to the side of the desk. Here's how: "Mr. Prospect, I have some things I need to tell you as well as show you. To do that I need to move this chair to the side of the desk. Will that be all right with you?"

If you work in a specialty shop or a small store, it is almost always good strategy to move from behind the counter and get on the prospect's side. This eliminates a "barrier" and helps to establish trust. Two exceptions to this procedure occur when the shop is busy with customers or your prospect is still in the selection process and you need to take additional items from the display case.

If you are in direct sales, if it is humanly possible (without making an issue of it) to get the prospect seated at the kitchen or breakfast-nook table,

you are in the ideal spot to sell. There is something about sitting at the table where bread is broken that makes the prospect more responsive. Generally speaking, most people invite *company* to visit in the living room; friends and acquaintances visit in the den; and *family* sits down at the kitchen table. When you sit at that kitchen table, you become, in the prospect's subconscious mind, a member of the family. And we do *trust* our family, don't we? We also *buy* from those we trust, don't we?

Physical Action Should Put the Prospect at Ease

Physical action means your samples are clean, well cared for, and in good order. Physical action means that in the beginning of the interview (primarily in direct sales) you have your order pad in plain view with your presentation book.

In the case of a real estate presentation, I urge you to have the legal document which you fill in to complete the sale in plain view on the front seat of your car. As you get into the car, hand the husband and wife a copy of the sales form and say, "In our city and state, this is the standard agreement that we use. During our drive to the various properties, you might want to glance through this and see if there are questions that you need to ask."

This is a simple way of getting the agreement into the prospects' hands and, more importantly, putting them at ease as you drive to the homes. It gives them a chance to look it over and is handled in such a matter-of-fact, nonthreatening manner it eases the closing process.

Instead of coming across as a "pressure" sales approach, it presents you, in the prospect's mind, as somebody who wants them to have all of the information so they can make a good, sound decision. If there are any questions, they obviously want them answered, and this approach showcases you as one who is willing to answer.

Physical action also means letting your product "sell itself." The next story by Janet Corning, taken from *Cheer*, a monthly publication of Realtor Larry Fargher and Realcom Associates of Santa Clara, California, illustrates the point beautifully.

Shortly after Christmas I almost stumbled over a little boy in the middle of the sidewalk who was so busy playing with a toy computer-controlled spaceship and a walking man that he was oblivious to the crowd milling around him. His obvious pleasure made me think the same toys would delight my own youngsters. I asked the little boy where he got them.

"In there," he said, pointing to a shop behind him.

I went in and asked for the toys the small boy was playing with. "Who is he?" I remarked, as the proprietor wrapped my purchases.

She smiled. "You might say he's my Christmas present. A few days ago he came in and stood, staring longingly at the spaceship. 'Would you like it for Christmas?' I asked.

"'Mother says there isn't any money for Christmas this year. We lost Dad last spring,' he explained, and turned to go.

"It had been a lean season for me, but it was a week before Christmas. I gave him the spaceship, and he was so delighted that he got no farther than the sidewalk before he sat down and inserted the batteries.

"Then the most amazing thing happened. People stopped to talk to him, and I've never had so many customers. I kept count of the spaceships I sold and when he got up to go I called him in and gave him a commission. I asked him to come back the next day and added the walking man to his playthings. Yesterday his commission amounted to twelve dollars!"

The story is a very good example of my often-repeated philosophy, you can have everything you want in life if you will just help enough other people get what they want. It also makes a pretty good point for generosity, "going the extra mile," "having a heart," investing in sales promotion, etc. I hope it's not necessary to remind you that the little guy was "the best salesman ever" because of his obvious ecstasy and sheer delight with the toys (products) he was playing with (demonstrating). He believed in his product, and even though he had no idea as to what a sales technique might be, he "sold" very effectively because he transferred his feelings to the prospects.

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The “Look and Listen” Close

Physical action means you physically *listen* to what the prospect is saying, not just with your ears but with your eyes as well. You do this by observing them. Physical action comes from watching what your prospects are physically doing. For example, a prospect might say no but is busy stroking the back of the chair. Their mouth says no, but their body language says *maybe*: “This is really nice,” “Tell me more,” or even “I’m interested and will buy if you will go ahead and close the sale.”

When this happens just remember a prospect *can* lie with their mouth but they *can’t* lie with their body. For example, you are showing a home and the prospect keeps giving objections such as, “It’s too expensive, don’t like the corner lot, too far out of town,” etc., but all the time they’re looking at the beautiful neighborhood or gazing out a back window at the view, admiring the master bedroom or the kitchen cabinets. If they walk back to take one more look at anything, you can be assured that in their mind they are buying the property. You’re in an excellent position to sell. The body doesn’t lie, and that’s just one of the reasons *you should learn to lean forward with the complete expectancy of making the sale when you ask for the order.*

When the prospect for the automobile says they would never pay $20,000 for an automobile but is stroking the upholstery or looking at the performance figures, then you need to understand what their mouth is saying and what their body is saying are two entirely different things. One more time: they can lie with their mouth; they can’t lie with their body.

When a prospect says no with their mouth but ends a sentence with a *but*, you know you’ve got a prospect. “No, I don’t think so, *but* this really is nice.” If you are tuned in to what they’re doing by watching their body language, you’re going to be able to persuade more prospects to take action —*now*.

The fourth key in closing the sale is the "Key of Enthusiasm." This key, along with the Key of Persistence, is the most misunderstood key of them all. Many people think that enthusiasm means you're loud. Obviously, you can be enthusiastic *and* loud, but in its truest sense, enthusiasm has nothing to do with being loud. Enthusiasm comes from the two Greek words *en theos* and literally means "God within." Look at the last four letters in *enthusiasm*. They are I-A-S-M and are an acrostic for "I Am Sold Myself." If you are sold on the product, goods, or services you sell, then you are going to be enthusiastic as you make your presentation and close.

The "Enthusiasm" Close

Enthusiasm sells. As I have said from the beginning, we sell because we transfer the feelings we have for what we're selling to our prospects. Sometimes—and I need to warn you about this—too much enthusiasm can cost you a sale. However, if I'm going to miss a sale I prefer to miss it on the positive side rather than on the negative side. I also believe that *for every sale you miss because you're too enthusiastic you will miss a hundred because you're not enthusiastic enough*. With odds like that I'll stay with the enthusiasm.

If You're Gonna Miss—Make It a Positive One

I'm almost certain that on occasion you'll make a desperate effort for a sale—and miss it. If you do miss, it's better to miss on the positive side because you might still make that sale—coming down.

Enthusiasm sells. Chances are excellent that on at least one occasion this last month you've had eggs for breakfast. The odds are even better you ate hen eggs instead of duck eggs, despite the fact that duck eggs taste better and are more nutritious. One reason you didn't eat duck eggs is probably that they were unavailable.

The reason they were unavailable is a lack of enthusiasm and no organized sales presentation on the part of the duck. When a duck lays an egg, her entire sales presentation is wrapped up in one short "quack," and

off she waddles. End of sales talk! Now when a hen lays an egg, she tells the whole world what she's done in a highly motivated and enthusiastic manner. No wonder we eat duck eggs by the dozen and hen eggs by the billions.

I don't believe this book will have a single reader who hasn't on occasion bought something and later had a friend or relative ask why. The response invariably is, "It's a marvelous product!" The questioner will insist on more of an answer. "What will it do?" Chances are good you've said, "A lot of things." The questioner persists, "Name one." And suddenly it dawns on you that you can't really name any specific benefit you received by buying the product, goods, or service. What happened was simple. You bought an enthusiastic salesperson. You bought the idea and the feeling this other person had for the product. You bought *their* belief in this product. You were sold because the salesperson was sold. It's true. Enthusiasm sells.

Yes, there are over a hundred closes in *Secrets of Closing the Sale*, but I fervently believe an enthusiastic salesperson who passionately believes in their product is going to sell more if they use only a few of them than the salesman who knows all of them but who is not enthusiastic in their presentation of these closes.

Ask—and You Shall Receive

The fifth key in persuading people to take action is the "Key of the Subordinate Question." A subordinate question is any question the answer to which, if positive, means the prospect has bought. If it is not positive, it does not mean he has not bought. My friend Hal Krause used this subordinate question as he headed into the close. "Well, Mr. Prospect, have you sold yourself or should I tell you more?" Two points: Never ask, "Have I got you sold?" People don't want *you* to sell them anything. They'll be pleased and even delighted to buy if they have sold themselves.

The answer to the question makes you a winner, regardless. If the prospect says, "Well, no, I'm sold," then you write the order. On the other hand, if they say, "No, I'm not quite sold; maybe you should tell me more," that's really all any good salesperson wants—a chance to tell their story. This approach provides you with that chance.

Many years ago I was scheduled to speak in Greenville, South Carolina. I had written for a hotel reservation. I assumed I had one, but when I walked into the lobby of the Holiday Inn, I knew I was in trouble. A sign at the back of the lobby read, “Traveling Men—Avoid Greenville, South Carolina, the week of October 11 through 15. It’s Textile Week.”

During that week you cannot get a room within fifty miles of Greenville. Rooms are booked from one year to the next. Nevertheless, I walked up to the counter, reached for the room registration, and boldly said to the clerk, “My name is Zig Ziglar. Would you check my mail, please?” The lady was not impressed. She asked: “Do you have a reservation?” Zig: “I certainly have—or at least I wrote for one.” Clerk: “When?” Zig: “A long time ago.” Clerk: “How long?” Zig: “Oh, it was three weeks—and would you please see if I’ve had any phone calls?” Clerk: “Mr. Ziglar, I might as well tell you —”

Zig (interrupting her): “Now just a minute, ma’am,” and about that time another lady stepped out from behind the counter. The first clerk was apparently new on the job, so with some relief she turned to the second one and said, “This is Miss Fortune and she will help you.” I looked at Miss Fortune, grinned, and said, “She doesn’t *look* like ‘misfortune’ to me; she looks like good news all the way!”

The “Presidential” Close

She smiled good-naturedly and said, “Mr. Ziglar, ordinarily I am good news, but tonight—” I interrupted, “Just a minute, ma’am, don’t say another word. I’ve got to ask you two questions.” Miss Fortune: “OK.” Zig: “Question number one: Do you consider yourself an honest woman?” Miss Fortune: “I certainly do!” Zig: “OK, question number two: If the president of the United States were to walk through the door and come up to you and say, ‘I want a room,’ now tell me the truth, would you have one for him?”

She smiled and said, “Now, Mr. Ziglar, you and I both know that if the president of the United States were to come in here, I’d have a room for him.” Zig: “OK, ma’am, you’re an honest woman and I’m an honest man. You can take my word for it. The president of the United States is not going

to come through that door. I'll take his room!" I slept there that night—not because of what I *told* her but because of what I *asked* her.

As an interesting aside, the organization I was speaking for that evening had tried to get me a room and had failed, despite the fact that the secretary to the innkeeper was the wife of the man for whose organization I was speaking. The point is simple: The use of questions often leads to the sale.

I used this identical procedure to get a room at the Royal Sonesta Hotel in New Orleans. My wife and I, at the last moment, decided we wanted to celebrate one of our anniversaries in New Orleans, but everything was booked. I phoned, used this procedure on the manager, and got the room. It works!

Question: Will it work for you?

Answer: I can't say with certainty it will, but Larry Nichols, who at that time was the training manager for the Kirby Company of Cleveland, Ohio, was pleased that it worked for him. Here is the situation: The Kirby Company had a managers' meeting scheduled at the Industry Hills Sheraton in City of Industry, California, on July 21, 1983. Larry arrived late at night, but when he attempted to check in the clerk told him he did not have a reservation and there were no rooms available.

Larry is a person who believes if something works you shouldn't fix it, so he followed the procedure exactly as I had described it on the cassette recording. When he asked the clerk if the president of the United States walked in, would there be a room for him, a pleasant surprise was the result. The clerk smiled broadly and told Larry he would not have a room for the *current* president, but he would have one for the *former* president. "As a matter of fact," the clerk said, "we do have the Gerald and Betty Ford Suite and they are not going to be using it, so it's available for you."

Two points: First, the procedure works. Larry had a *nice* place to stay. Second, the clerk *honestly* had forgotten about that suite and Larry's questions jogged his memory. Need I remind you this procedure can be adapted and slightly changed when you seek an item which is in short supply, or when you need a service favor on a holiday or weekend?

My good friend and "brother" Bernie Lofchick instinctively answers every question with a question. One time I asked, "Bernie, why do you always answer questions with questions?" His response: "Well, why not?"

The “Three Question” Close

One of the simplest and most effective closes is the “Three Question” Close, which you use after you have convinced your prospect that your product or service will save money, time, work, etc. As an example, if you’ve been demonstrating the money-saving feature, the three questions are:

1. “Can you see where this would save you money?”
2. “Are you interested in saving money?” (Wait for answer.)
3. “If you were ever going to start saving money, when do you think would be the best time to start?”

The last question ties it down and gets the decision. If you’ve done your job and the prospect is honest, you just made a sale.

If you’re selling on health, you use the same three questions. “Can you see where this would be better for your health?” “Are you interested in better health?” “If you were ever going to start taking care of your health, when do you think would be the best time to start?” On convenience: “Can you see where this would save you some time and work?” “Are you interested in saving time and work?” “If you were ever going to start saving time and work, when do you think would be the best time to start?”

In our company everything we produce is essentially geared to improve production in one form or another. When our sales representatives are dealing with a salesperson, we teach them this adaptation of the “Three Question” Close: “Can you see how using this sales training course would increase your sales?” “Are you interested in increasing your sales?” “If you were ever going to start increasing your sales, when do you think would be the best time to start?” It’s effective.

The next example is a case study on how to ask questions effectively to lead even distraught prospects to a favorable decision.

Selling a Service

In 1982 and ’83, our daughter Julie worked for The Beneke Company as the only female public insurance adjustor in the state of Texas. Her job was essentially that of selling, so she and I took advantage of many opportunities to discuss sales technique and procedure. I was thrilled with her professionalism and the number of questions she developed to lead the prospect to favorable and mutually advantageous decisions.

Obviously, the company training program provided her with many techniques, procedures, and questions, but she generated some key ones on her own. Her primary prospects were those who had suffered major losses due to weather, fires, floods, or any other natural or man-made catastrophe. Most of her clients and prospects had suffered losses from fires, and the damage ranged from ten thousand to tens of thousands of dollars.

When Julie arrived for her “sales call,” the first question she always asked was, “Did everyone get out OK?” Please understand that nearly 100 percent of the people she dealt with were emotionally upset. Not only are fires hazardous to your health, but they are also messy and expensive. Many times the victims had also lost personal items, irreplaceable keepsakes, and family heirlooms. Their need for someone to share in their grief and give them some measure of empathy and understanding was enormous. Julie’s opening question demonstrated real concern for the victim and helped create a favorable climate for the interview. That opening question also brought the victim face-to-face with their good fortune in suffering only the loss of “things” and not a loved one (she never had a client who suffered that loss).

Establish Rapport—Then Ask Questions

Once the prospect had assured Julie that everyone was OK, she made a few comments expressing her relief and her sincere regret for the property loss. Once rapport had been established, Julie asked the second question: “Have you ever had a major property loss before?” (Most of them had not.) “Did you ever have a claim on a car wreck or damage?” If the answer was affirmative, she would ask, “How did it go?” If the answer was, “Satisfactory,” she responded positively by saying, “Generally speaking, on small losses the treatment is usually fair.” If the answer was negative, she responded, “Then you are already familiar with how insurance company

adjustors work in order to minimize the settlement amount?" (Her voice inflection made the statement a question.) She would generally wait for a comment.

Julie: "Did you know you have a right to a professional representative when you suffer a loss such as this?" Prospect: "No, I didn't." Julie: "Do you understand, Mr. Prospect, that whether or not you want to be, right now you are your own claims adjustor?" Prospect: "I hadn't really thought about it." Julie: "Do you feel knowledgeable enough to negotiate with the expert the insurance company will send out to adjust your loss?" Prospect: "Probably not." Julie: "Do you have as high a regard for your money, Mr. Prospect, as the insurance company does for its money?" Prospect: "Yes, I do." Julie: "Do you realize they're going to send out a professional to protect their money?" Prospect: "I hadn't thought about it in those terms." Julie: "Their claims adjustor is a professional, so do you think it would be in your best interests to have a professional protecting your money?" Prospect: "Yes, I probably should." Julie: "You do understand that the insurance company is not simply going to say, 'Send us the bill and we'll pay it,' don't you?"

Each of these questions is designed to make the prospect think in terms of using a professional because the insurance company is also going to have a professional. This is not to imply that the insurance company wants to cheat anyone or is going to be unfair. Realistically, the homeowner, in most cases, does not understand their rights and in virtually every case forgets many of the items which are destroyed in a fire.

Other questions Julie often asked: "Mr. Prospect, would it be a problem for you and your wife to take time away from work and family to sift through, sort out, write down, and price everything you lost in your home, from the brooms in the utility room closet to the number of socks in your drawers?" Prospect: "Yes, it would." Julie: "Would it be convenient for you to meet with the adjustor, restoration people, dry cleaners, and others who need access to your home and belongings?" Prospect: "That depends on when and where." Julie: "In a court of law you have an attorney to represent you, and in front of the IRS you have a CPA to plead your case. Doesn't it make sense that you would do better to have a professional adjustor plead your case in this loss?" Prospect: "Sounds reasonable."

Julie: "When you get down to negotiating the loss, will you feel comfortable the figures being presented are just and fair to you?" Prospect:

“I’m not sure.” Julie: “Mr. Prospect, did you know that our average increase, after the insurance company’s first offer, is thirty percent?” Prospect: “No.” Julie: “Mr. Prospect, our fee is only ten percent, so you still realize an additional two hundred dollars per one thousand dollars by making the right decision to hire a professional. In simple terms, on a loss of twenty thousand dollars this will bring you four thousand dollars extra; on fifty thousand dollars it would be an extra ten thousand, which is in reality your money, which you will need to rebuild and replace your loss. These figures are net to you, after our fee. Does that extra money—which *is* yours—appeal to you, Mr. Prospect?” Prospect: “It sure does!”

Julie: “The exciting fact, Mr. Prospect, is that we guarantee our work. If we don’t secure a settlement large enough to cover your repairs *and* our fee, there will be no fee. In other words, Mr. Prospect, there’s no way you can lose. Is that the kind of situation you’d like to participate in, Mr. Prospect?” Prospect: “Yes, it is.” Julie: “Would you like for us to start working for you today so you can move back into your home at the earliest possible moment, or is there any particular hurry?” Prospect: “We don’t have a place to live, so the sooner we can move back in, the better it will be.” Julie: “If you will go ahead and OK this agreement, we can get the process started so that despite the grief of the loss, you will not be faced with a financial burden to go along with it. That is what you want, isn’t it, Mr. Prospect?” Prospect: “Yes.”

If you count, you’ll discover that in the process she asked over a dozen questions. Her results were excellent because the questions were designed to lead that person to take the action step to solve their problem.

You Can—You Must—Learn to Ask Questions

Many times people ask me how they can learn to ask questions. The first thing I’m going to tell you is obvious: *Study*—don’t just read—this book. Take all of the questions (there are over eight hundred in this book) and rephrase them so they relate directly to your business. Then record those questions with the right voice inflection and listen repeatedly until they are firmly embedded in your subconscious mind.

This will clarify your thinking to an amazing degree. It will enable you to zero in on your target, which is to help crystallize your prospect’s thinking

that helps them in making the right decision. This is critical because *your* success *and* the solution to their problem are ultimately dependent on their making the right choice.

Additionally, you should learn how to ask questions by talking with the top salespeople and sales trainers with your company or by asking other salespeople who sell similar products. Ask them the specific questions they use to (1) arouse interest, (2) sell benefits, (3) get appointments, (4) secure prospects, (5) close the sale, (6) tie down the order, and (7) convey conviction. Keep your eyes and ears open when you go out to shop or when a salesperson comes calling on you.

Build a sales library and become a student of selling. Develop the power to concentrate on one thing at a time. In this case that one thing is how to ask questions. Any time you see or hear an effective sales question, write it down in the question section of your sales notebook. Remember—the truly professional salesperson *always* keeps their inner ear and their sixth sense tuned in to good sales techniques. They have that true missionary zeal to learn as much as they can so they can spread the word to as many people as possible about their fantastic product or service.

The "Greatest Salesman" Close

Since I am often asked about sources for learning more about asking questions, I'll simply anticipate your question.

There is a manual available in every good bookstore which will be enormously helpful to you in learning how to ask questions. The manual you'll want to pick up is called the Holy Bible. At this moment this has nothing to do with religion, but any fair-minded person has got to admit that the greatest salesman who ever lived was the carpenter from Galilee.

Get a red-letter edition (Christ's words are in red), and you will discover that *every* time somebody asked Jesus Christ a question He always answered with a question or with a parable. So if you want to know how to ask questions, that's the place to learn! (Everything He said in the Bible can be read in about three hours, so He was obviously going right at our hearts with every word.)

He was also the greatest sales and marketing manager who ever lived. He took just twelve salesmen—and one of them (Judas) was a loser—and spread the good news everywhere in short order.

As long as you are reading the Bible to learn how to *ask* questions, you might as well read on and learn the answers. One of these days He's going to ask you a question, and if you get it right, you get to stay! My friend, that will be the biggest sale you will ever make! You really should read your Bible. Not only will it give you peace of mind now, but to tell you the truth, it'll help keep the heat off you later!

The "Dinner Out" Close

Questions are especially effective if you can tie customer benefits to the question. The "customer" is the person who is buying the idea, concept, goods, service, or product from you, whether it is a sale or a social situation. Never will I forget one Friday evening when I returned from a tough week on the road. The Redhead met me at the airport and she was dressed to kill. As usual, she had on some of the good, sweet-smelling stuff that I especially like.

As we were waiting for my bag to come down on the carousel, she snuggled up real close, slipped her hand into mine (she's powerful friendly, anyhow!) and said, "Honey, I know it's been a long, tough week for you, so if you want to we can stop by the store on the way home and pick up a nice steak or some seafood. While you relax with the paper I'll prepare a nice dinner for two. Tom is spending the night with Sam, so we'll be by ourselves. Then, honey, after we've had a nice dinner I'm certain you won't want to get involved in cleaning dirty dishes and greasy pots and pans, so you can watch television while I take care of that.

"It shouldn't take me more than an hour, hour and a half, two hours at the most. [Pause] Or, the thought occurs to me, honey, that you might be more comfortable and enjoy the evening more if I were completely free to devote all of my time and energy to you. I could do this in a really nice restaurant. Of course, honey, it's entirely up to you. What do you prefer?" And men call women "the weaker sex"!

I don’t really think it’s necessary to tell you we did not stop by the grocery store or cook that dinner at home. That Redhead “sold” me by asking questions. It is effective *persuasion* when you ask questions which lead the prospect to a decision that is in their best interests.

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Listen—Really Listen

The sixth key in closing sales is a very significant one. It is the "Key of Listen." Most salespeople do not really listen to everything the prospect is saying or asking. Many times the salesperson interrupts the prospect and attempts to anticipate what they are going to ask. Solomon covers this one in the book of Proverbs when he says, "He who answers before listening—that is his folly and his shame" (my paraphrase of Proverbs 18:13). And when you listen—*listen.* Don't just "hear them out" so you can take the initiative and "say something which is really important." Chances are excellent if you really *hear* what they say *and* what they are saying, they will give you the key to making the sale.

An inexperienced or insecure salesperson is the one who asks the question and answers it in the same breath. Example: "Can you see where this would save you some money—of course you can!" "Can you see where this would help you save some work—obviously you can." The salesperson is afraid they're going to get the wrong answer and therefore they do not permit the prospect to give them any answer. When you ask a question, listen for the answer. It will give you the proper direction to close the sale.

If the prospect raises an objection, that's great! As a matter of fact, any good presentation should be designed—especially in the early part—to bring out objections. The earlier you can deal with them the more likely you are to close the sale.

Hear Everything—Register Some Things

You need to listen and hear everything, but when the prospect says no, you don't want to register it. Merlie Hoke, a good friend of mine from South Carolina, worked with me for several years in the cookware business. She had a peculiar hearing "problem." I've seen a prospect from a distance of three feet almost shout, "No, Merlie, I don't want to buy!" Merlie wouldn't blink. She didn't "hear" a word. I've also seen a prospect whisper yes at thirty feet and Merlie clearly heard the good news. Merlie understands that when a prospect says no they don't really mean it. It's only when they say yes that she takes them seriously.

The "Hep 'Em Git It" Close

Merlie Hoke has a technique which is truly beautiful. As she starts to close the sale, from her seated position in front of the couple she makes this statement (as she moves her chair to the side of the lady): "Oh, this is so beautiful . . . and you deserve it . . . and I'm gonna hep [that's h-e-p] ya git it."

As I sat there watching this master saleslady at work, I got the distinct feeling I was witnessing a conspiracy. It appeared that Merlie and the little lady were going to gang up on that big old cookware company because they've got thousands of sets of cookware and bless your heart, little lady, you haven't got even one! "And I'm gonna hep ya git it!"

Good Salespeople Help Prospects to Buy

I got the strong feeling that Merlie Hoke had become an assistant buyer. *She had moved to the customer's side of the table and was interested only in helping that customer own the set of cookware.* Now obviously she was going to be using the customer's money. In all the years I worked with Merlie, I never heard her say she "sold" anybody anything. She always said, "I helped her get it," or "I let her have it."

In the final analysis, what we as professional salespeople want to do is find people with a problem which our products, goods, or services will solve. We want to become assistant buyers and move to their side of the

table. We want to feel their feelings so we can assist them in solving their problem by acquiring our goods, products, or services.

Listen with Your Eyes. As we deal with our prospects we particularly need to listen with our eyes. The eyes are the only sense organ connected directly to the brain. Every other sense organ has to make a round trip before it gets back to the brain, but the "eyes are the windows of the soul," and an impulse on the eye is transmitted directly to the brain. That could be one of the reasons all of your life you've heard the two phrases "You can't believe everything you hear" and "I saw it with my own two eyes—and seeing is believing." With this in mind we definitely need to listen with our ears *and* with our eyes.

Here's a simple little formula for listening with your eyes: It's called the "CHEF Method" of listening. *C* stands for "chin" or "cheek." When the prospect begins to rub either their chin or cheek or holds either one in their hand, it is a satisfaction/gratification sign. In their mind they're already using and enjoying the benefits of the goods or services you're selling. It is a buying signal, telling you that now is the time to close.

H is for "hands." Watch your prospect's hands. If they are gently massaging palm against palm or palm against the back of the other hand, in their own mind the prospect has already assumed ownership of whatever you are selling. They're telling you they are ready to buy.

E stands for "eyes." Watch them. It's a fact that the wider the eyes are open the more intently they are listening, the more they're understanding, and the more they're buying. To magnify this one a bit, many of the advertisements you see today on television have been checked by the use of cameras. The commercials are shown to a group of people who are never questioned about their sentiments concerning the commercials. Instead, high-powered cameras focus on the eyes of the individuals who are watching. The degree of dilation of the prospect's pupils determines whether or not that prospect is really buying the idea in the commercial.

Interestingly enough, the prospect might say they loved the commercial, but if the pupils are not dilating, the commercial is rejected. As I say, body language doesn't lie.

You also want to watch the prospect's eyes as they begin to open wider. If there are crow's-feet and they begin to relax, you are getting your message across—you're communicating and selling. It's a visual signal to close the sale.

F stands for “friendly.” When the prospect smilingly uses such statements as, “John, you dirty dog! Jesse James used a gun but you’re using your pencil, trying to get my money!” they’re buying.

They are also probably calling you by your first name; they cross their legs, lean back, and relax. On the other hand, they may suddenly become quiet, get up, and walk around the item without even speaking. They may get busy looking at the item you offered or they simply might look out the window, light a cigarette, or get a cup of coffee. Those are buying signals. *Close the sale.*

Act on the Signals

As the prospect gives you these “buying signals” (a “visual” buying signal is defined by John Hammond as anything the prospect *does* that indicates they have accepted the product), you want to take advantage of them. You do this by *quietly* asking questions. For some reason, according to Will Rogers, people seem to listen more intently and believe more completely anything which they hear in a low tone of voice or a whisper.

Obviously, you do not want to overlook these visual buying signals. The prospect might, for example, ask you to go over exactly what they get with the purchase. Comments like, “I’ve never had this particular style [size, model].” Questions like, “How long is the warranty?” “When would the first payment be due?” “How much is the deposit?” “How long will it take me to get delivery?” “What is your service policy?” “Where do we get spare parts?” “Do you have a warranty?” “How much did you say the deposit was?” “I’ve never used this brand.” “What do you think, dear?” “What is the *real* rate of interest?” “How long would it take to get it installed?”

Yes, the Key of Listen is a critically important key. The ability to be a good listener is vitally important in communication. Many people will buy primarily because you display an interest in them as individuals. They buy because you listen to some of their hopes and ambitions and apply your product or service benefits directly to them.

The Key of the Impending Event

The seventh key is the "Key of the Impending Event." What is an "impending event"? It's something that is going to happen in the future and has direct bearing on the price, performance, service, desirability, or availability of the goods or services you are selling.

Almost without exception I can assure everyone who reads this book that whatever they're selling today will be more expensive tomorrow. There will be some notable exceptions (computers, electronic devices, etc.), but by and large things *are* going up. With this fact as a base, once we've committed ourselves to serve our customers, we need to offer them the most goods at the best price with the best possible service. Since price increases are inevitable, if we can persuade our prospects to take action today, we will be acting in our prospect's best interests.

When I entered the world of selling, one of the first things my good friend and sales manager, Bill Cranford, told me was that if I could effectively deal with the "I'll buy it later" stall, I would be successful in the world of selling. Over the years I came to realize and appreciate the value of that observation. I also saw convincing evidence as to why prospects hesitated and wanted to "think it over." They feared they would lose financially or look foolish for having bought.

The Key of the Impending Event is a key you can use to help your customers, which obviously means you'll be helping yourself as well. This is especially true when you're selling a product to the customer that has resale value and hence the prospect is investing for profit or investment purposes. Typical, of course, are real estate, fine arts, securities, commercial-grade diamonds, and stocks and bonds. Obviously, your sales effort will be to convince the prospect that economic trends are such that the investment they make today will be worth more in the tomorrows of their life.

The "Impending Event" Close

Here is an example of the "Impending Event" Close. Prospect: "The price on this house is too high." You: "Yes, I'd be inclined to agree with you. The

price on this home—like most everything else—is too high. But you, Mr. Prospect, are the one who set the price." Prospect: "What do you mean, I set the price?" You: "Actually, it was you *and* all the other people who are in the market for homes who really set the price of the homes. For example, if 90 percent of the people who are in the market for a home were to suddenly stop looking, I can assure you that in a matter of six months the price of this house would be considerably less. However, everything indicates more—and not fewer—buyers will soon be in the market for a home, and the law of supply and demand sets the price.

"As you well know, real estate has consistently increased in price. It's my firm conviction that a year from now or ten years from now, should you elect to sell this home, you will be able to get substantially more for it than the current price. If you go ahead and invest in this home today, you will profit from the *impending increase* in price brought about because of the demand for homes created by you and thousands of others."

Another Impending Event opportunity is the fact that anyone who lives will have more birthdays and consequently they need to look at retirement or taking care of their old age. Your prospect *is* going to want to enjoy some good things in the future when they will not be working quite so hard. As an example, if you're selling a retirement home, beach, or lakeshore property, the close could go like this: "Mr. Prospect, since you've been putting so much into life for so long, don't you think it's time you prepare to let life put something back in you? This property I'm talking about will do exactly that."

Don't Let Them Dazzle You with Their Footwork

Mental alertness is a critical necessity if you expect to scale the sales heights, so let's take a little test to see if you're with it. (It's OK to figure in the margins.) Here we go.

You're a bus driver and you're headed south with fifty-five passengers on the first leg of your trip in your bus. You go four and four-tenths miles, then you turn east in your bus on the second leg of your trip and you go three and three-tenths miles. On the third leg of your trip in your bus you turn back to the south and this time you drive your bus exactly two and two-

tenths miles. On the last leg of your trip in your bus you turn east and you go exactly one and one-tenth miles.

On this trip you've driven your bus in two directions but you've made three turns for the four different legs of your trip in your bus. You actually drove 4.4 + 3.3 + 2.2 + 1.1 miles, which comes to exactly 11 miles.

Here's the question (no fair looking back!): Based on the information which I've just given you, please write the bus driver's age in this blank _____. (I repeat, it's OK to figure in the margin.) Go ahead—participate. Figure it out. That is the way we learn. You'll find the answer in the next section.

Don't Let Them Lead You Astray

If you missed it, the chances are good you did because I dazzled you with my verbal footwork. I kept you diverted by talking about unrelated items such as "Turn east, south, and east again." I talked about fifty-five passengers, 4.4, 3.3, 2.2, 1.1 miles, etc. At this point, you've got to be wondering, *What does this have to do with closing a sale?* Answer: A lot. Many times when you've got the prospect motivated and interested in what you're selling, they suddenly realize they are headed straight for a purchase and it hits them that this purchase is not in the budget.

This is a problem. They fear they are now going to make a *yes* decision and they're not certain they should. Their solution: Divert the salesperson's attention and thrust by talking about the presidential election, crime on our streets, violence on television, etc. So what do you, the salesperson, do? Two things: First, never lose sight of your objective, which is to make a sale. Second, when the prospect changes the subject, you acknowledge the change, comment briefly, and tie it to the diversion, for example, "Yes, the presidential election is really exciting and so are the benefits which go with our product or service."

When I was a child I would occasionally see a bird that was apparently injured, so I would try to catch it. However, as I made my move the bird would struggle into the air and fly a few feet. Again I'd run after it and say, "I'm going to catch that bird." A little later and a mile away, Mama Bird would take off and go back to the nest. What Mama Bird had done was led me astray.

Message: Don’t let your prospects lead you astray by changing the subject and leading you away from the issue at hand. Keep in mind that it might be nice to talk about other things, but you don’t help anybody unless you can leave that prospect with a solution to the problem they have. Your goods or services should offer that solution.

Answer: Did you put your own age in the blank? If you didn’t, please prepare to be a little embarrassed, because I told you twenty-four times, “*You’re* a bus driver and on the first leg of *your* trip in *your* bus *you* are going south,” etc.

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The Keys in Closing—Conclusion

Of all of the keys in persuasion, undoubtedly the one which is *the* most misunderstood is the eighth, the "Key of Persistence." Many people think the persistent salesperson is the one who "sits" on the prospect and says, "Aw, you know you're going to get it sooner or later, SIGN HERE!" Or "You know you want it, go ahead and SIGN," or "The only way you can get it is to SIGN HERE, so SIGN HERE." That's not persistence; that's just plain, unadulterated pressure. All you do is irritate people when you take that approach. I thoroughly covered that subject in chapter 5, so let's look now at what persistence really is.

Persistence is a good word, but I believe a better word is *belief*. I'm convinced if you really believe the product you're selling will solve a problem for the person you're dealing with, you will be reasonably insistent they take action in their own best interests. You'll do it professionally—pleasantly—politely—but you *will* persist.

The "Pressure Belief" Close

The word *persistence* took on a new meaning for me several years ago. I was on a speaking tour of Australia and met John Nevin, who at that time was the managing director for World Book Encyclopedia. His story is the classic "rags to riches" one. He started his World Book career as a part-time representative. He had a milk route and sold World Book in the afternoons and evenings. His dedication, hard work, and mental agility enabled him to move quickly up the management ladder to the position of managing director.

Early in his World Book career, John made a call on a recently arrived German immigrant and his wife and son. The couple really looked more like grandparents than parents. They married late in life and their first and only child came along when the wife was forty-two years old.

"Tank You, Young Man"

John arrived for the appointment at about eight o'clock, and it was after midnight when he finally made the sale. Many salespeople would never stay with a prospect that long. But John said to me, "You know, Zig, after I finally made the sale the little lady escorted me out through the front gate because they had a big dog in the yard. Outside the gate, the short, stocky mother reached up and put her hand on my shoulder and in that guttural German accent which was difficult to understand, she said, 'Tank you, young man, for staying till we understand what these books do for our boy. Tank you, tank you, tank you!'"

John and the couple had a serious communications problem because of their unfamiliarity with the English language. They understood some things, but it was necessary for John to talk very slowly and repeat himself many times. Finally, it got through to the couple that the World Book Encyclopedia would make a difference in the education of *their* son. Later, John said, "You know, I hate to think I ever missed a sale because I was not communicating and the prospect was not properly understanding what my product would mean to him." Message: *The true professional wants the prospect to own the product so badly they strive for the* yes *decision again and again.*

As a salesperson you must also understand that many times the prospect is sold on what you're selling but they've been had before. They've made mistakes earlier by acting too quickly, and what they really want to know is, "Do *you* [the salesperson] really believe what you are selling is for *my* benefit, or are you just trying to sell me so *you* will benefit?"

Make Certain You Pass the Test

Many times the prospect will ask you some questions which really don't make sense. They're trying to find out if you're going to stick to the story you told them earlier. They're checking you out. Many times I've made the sale (and so have you) after I'd been with the prospect a long time, only to have the prospect look at me, grin, and say, "I was going to buy this all the time. I just wanted to find out what you would say."

That's what they *said*, but I'm convinced they were really checking the depth of my own conviction as to what the product would do for them. One more time. From Cavett Robert, *"The depth of your belief is far more important than your oratorical eloquence and sales phraseology."*

Some Persistence Ideas

It has been said—and I believe it's true—that many times the prospect will literally test you at least three times just out of curiosity to see exactly what you will say. Obviously, some people—particularly those who are not knowledgeable about selling—will label it as "pressure" if a salesperson doesn't take the first *no* as the final word.

In chapter 30 I discussed how to get permission to use "pressure," so I won't repeat it here. Let me point out, however, that over the years I've asked hundreds of people to identify pressure and I've gotten answers from all over the ballpark. Salespeople themselves say they don't like high-pressure salesmen but then seem to be unable to identify what the word means.

I'm convinced it's not so much what it means to us as salespeople but what the prospect we're dealing with at the moment feels about it. That's another reason I keep saying you need to be sensitive to the other person. One prospect might feel terribly uncomfortable if you give them the second reason they should buy. Another one thrives on that very thing and loves to see a salesperson who is gung ho about what they're doing and who so fervently believes the prospect benefits from the purchase that they will try again and again to make the sale.

The Best I've Heard

Frank Bettger, in his magnificent book *How I Multiplied My Income and Happiness in Selling*, explained pressure this way: “I don’t want to give anyone the impression that I am a high-pressure salesman. That is if I understand what the term ‘high-pressure’ means. Just so long as I can forget myself and what I am going to make out of a sale, and keep my mind on the other person and what he will get out of the sale, I have no fear of creating the impression that I am high-pressure.”

Is this pressure? You’re in the real estate business. You’ve just shown a couple a home which they obviously love. It’s exactly what they’ve dreamed of owning, but they are procrastinators who hesitate to make decisions. They’re gracious, pleasant, and friendly but hesitant to decide. From your perspective you positively know at least one other couple is also seriously interested in that home. Are you doing the current prospect a favor by smiling and saying, “Well, I don’t want to rush you into anything and I certainly don’t want to pressure you into making a decision, so as soon as you make up your mind, let me know”? The couple responds that they really appreciate your consideration and they’ll be back in touch the next day.

Problem: That very afternoon the other couple who was interested comes in and buys the home. I’m convinced that you would have been far more loving, caring, concerned, *and professional* if you had taken this approach: Truthfully point out to the prospects that you want them to make the right decision and that you don’t want them to feel rushed. However, if they are sincerely interested in the home, they should put a binder on it to secure it, because another couple is also interested in the home and for exactly the same reasons they are.

You actually flatter your prospect when you do this because you’re complimenting them on their judgment—that they like the home for the same reason the other people like it. In short, both couples have good judgment.

Go Ahead, Doctor, Do What Is Best

In 1981 a close personal friend and business associate went to his dentist. The diagnosis was that, because of some problems with his teeth as a young boy, he needed nine crowns. As you know, that involves a considerable

amount of time and money, so my friend asked if some teeth needed crowns more than others. The dentist replied that five should be done right away, but there was no immediate rush for the other four. With this information, he decided not to have all nine done but did go ahead with the five.

Several years later, my friend still has not had the other four crowned. Question: Was his dentist practicing either good dentistry or good selling? Answer: No, on both counts. As a professional salesman, one simple question would have revealed that my friend's dental bill was covered as one of the company benefits which he enjoys. As far as dentistry is concerned, my advisors point out three very significant facts concerning the delay for the other four crowns.

First, they say piecemeal dentistry is never as attractive or effective as a completed project. In short, the dentist can do all nine at the same time and have a better chance of a more complete success with matching colors and results than if he crowns five at one time and the other four at a later date. Second, although the possibilities are slim, they do exist that a tooth deterioration could occur quite rapidly and my friend might end up losing one or more of the other four teeth. Admittedly, the chances are small because he has had his teeth checked since he received those five crowns. At that point the dentist rather casually mentioned that he still needed those other crowns but did not suggest setting a date. Since the dentist was casual about the need, my friend was just as casual about getting the crowns.

From a dentistry point of view, the odds are great that the price of crowns, like everything else, will have increased substantially during the intervening time period between the first five and the final four, whenever that might be. Additionally, the time involvement for one project, namely, having nine crowns, as versus two projects, meaning five crowns on this go-round and four crowns for the second series of visits, will be considerable. Obviously, there is some risk involved when a professional encourages a patient to take action. However, when your prospects or patients *depend* on you for your professional advice, you should be willing to take some risk.

Now You Have Two Problems

If there is some indication the prospect is growing uncomfortable with your persistence, you might smile and say, “You know, Mr. Prospect, when you and I started talking you had one problem. Now you have two, because you’ve got to get rid of me.” Smile as you say this and continue by saying, “Now the second problem is easy to solve. All you’ve got to do is ask me to leave and I’ll be gone in the twinkling of an eye. But that would still leave you with the first problem. So why don’t we spend a few more minutes together and see if we can solve that problem as well. *Is that fair enough?*” or *“Does that make sense?”*

Another approach: “Don’t misunderstand, Mr. Prospect, I’m not here to put the monkey *on* your back—I’m here to take him *off* your back. That’s what our goods or services will do and that is what you want to have happen, isn’t it?”

One excellent reason for persisting is that’s where you really learn to sell. After all, *the toughies are the teachers*. The ones who resist are the ones who force you to use the imagination, skill, and knowledge reserve you’ve been accumulating over a period of time.

Yes, persistence is an important key. Learn to use it—then use it but don’t abuse it. Remember, in selling, those who hang in there often win because they believe in what they’re doing, and as you have already learned, *“The will which weakens first strengthens the other.”*

The Key of Inducement

The ninth key in closing the sale is the “Key of Inducement.” Chances are good that if you have ever spent a few minutes with me, you have seen my arrow-shaped diamond cuff links which the Redhead gave me on our twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. I confess to a degree of prejudice, but I honestly believe they’re the most beautiful (not the biggest) diamond cuff links in the whole world.

When she gave me those cuff links, French-cuff shirts were not very popular. I went to a dozen different stores in Dallas, Texas, looking for French-cuff shirts and I could not find them anywhere. Not only could I not find them, but I was virtually invited to take my future “looking for” business to other stores. A typical conversation went like this. Zig: “Do you have any French-cuff shirts?” Clerk (certainly not a salesman!): “No, we

don’t.” Zig: “Do you know where I might find them?” Clerk: “No, I don’t. Besides, didn’t you see me talking to this other clerk? I’m busy!” That little interchange is almost a literal truth.

The next spring, I was in Burlington, Iowa, speaking for the chamber of commerce. After my talk I saw a gentleman in a white suit which I really liked, so I asked him where he got it. He told me he bought it from Doyle Hoyer, who runs Glasgow Clothiers in Fort Madison, Iowa. I commented that I was going to go over there the next day and get one just like it. With that he said, “I’ve got to go over there tomorrow morning, too, and I’ll be glad to take you.”

After I met Doyle Hoyer the next day, the following conversation took place. Zig: “Doyle, do you have a white suit?” Doyle: “What size?” Zig: “I wear size forty-one.” Doyle: “Zig, I’ve got one in stock.” With that he walked over, took the suit off the rack, and slipped the coat on me to check the fit, which was perfect. All he needed to do was cuff the trousers and I could walk out the door in that suit of clothes.

As Doyle measured me I asked, “Doyle, how long will it take me to get this suit?” Doyle: “Well, Zig, you don’t leave until two o’clock, do you?” Zig: “No, I don’t.” Doyle: “Man, you’re going to take this suit with you!” He gave the suit to a young man who worked with him and said, “Take it upstairs to the tailor and tell him I want this suit right away.”

Then with a twinkle in his eye, Doyle looked at me and said, “Now, Zig, I’ve got something I really want to show you.”

The “I Can Get ’Em” Close

When I finished my shopping spree, almost as an afterthought I said, “Oh, by the way, Doyle, do you have any French-cuff shirts?” Doyle gave me an answer which was entirely different from the one I had been getting in Dallas.

He said, “No, I haven’t,” but he said something else. “But I can get them!” As a frustrated French-cuff-shirt seeker, those were beautiful words to me! Before I left there I bought two suits, five pairs of slacks, and all the good stuff that goes with them! As a follow-up a couple of weeks later,

Doyle called and asked, “Did you get your shirts?” Zig: “I sure did!” Doyle: “How do you like them?” Zig: “Doyle, I love them!”

About two weeks later I was in the airport in Kansas City and I saw a fellow wearing a beautiful suit. (You are now going to find out how I select some of my clothes.) I walked over to him, complimented him on his suit, and asked him about it. He was delighted to give me all the information concerning the brand and his source for the suit. Armed with this information, I called Doyle and asked if he had this particular suit. Doyle: “No, I don’t . . . but I can get it.” A couple of weeks later he called me again and asked, “Zig, did you get your suit?” Zig: “I sure did.” Doyle: “How do you like it?” Zig: “I love it!”

About a month later I called Doyle again, but this time when he picked up the phone he excitedly asked, “Zig! Are you still at the same phone number?” Zig: “Yes, I am.” Doyle: “Man, I was just going to call you!” Zig: “Yeah, and I know exactly what you were going to tell me, too!” Doyle: “You do?” Zig: “Sure! You’re going to tell me you just got in a magnificent new shipment of suits and at least half a dozen of them are especially made for me. You’ve put my name on them and are shipping them to Dallas so I can choose the ones I want and send the rest of them back to you.” Doyle: “Zig, you are a genius!”

Now I need to make an important point. I am not color-blind, but I am color-ignorant. I simply do not know which colors go together. Doyle picks out a suit, selects a shirt, chooses a tie and socks, and sends them to me with a note which says, “Zig, these go together.” Now I can understand that kind of communication! Fortunately, the Redhead understands color combinations, so when I forget or get fouled up in general about what goes with what, she straightens me out.

My tailor is just a short distance from my house, so when Doyle Hoyer sent me my clothes it was easy to have them altered as needed.

The “I’ll Treat You Right” Close

I’ll never forget the time he called me and raved about a beautiful new navy-blue cashmere sport coat. By the time he finished his eloquent and enthusiastic sales talk, I had a fear the price tag would bear some

resemblance to the foreign-aid bill to Lower Slobovia, so I asked the obvious question: “Doyle, how much does this magnificent creation cost?” Doyle: “Don’t worry about it, Zig, I’m going to treat you right.”

Actually, I don’t know why I bothered to ask, because he *always* gave me the same answer. I hasten to add that he has *earned* the right, over a period of many years, to give me that answer.

Now what does “treat you right” mean? It means he’s going to be fair, he’s going to be honest, he’s going to be aboveboard. It does not mean he gives me his profit. You see, I happen to believe Doyle Hoyer needs and deserves a profit. But it does mean he’s going to deal with his customers in such a way that they will buy from him again and again. He’s a super salesman who serves his customers.

The “And Then Some” Close

Doyle understands the three greatest words in selling are: *and then some*. He keeps every promise he makes—*and then some*. The clothes he sells are exactly what he says they are—*and then some*. In a nutshell, Doyle Hoyer delivers more than he sells—he doesn’t sell more than he delivers. *That* is the way to sell more in the tomorrows of life.

There is a second point which is important: There is no such thing as a *little* sale. When Doyle got the six shirts for me, he had no way of knowing how much business it would generate. I was a complete stranger who lived eight hundred miles from his store and he had never heard of me. Yet he went out of his way to make certain I got what I wanted and that I was happy.

At the moment I have no idea how many clothes Doyle has sold to me and because of me, but he says he gets from one to ten calls every week because of my references to him in my speeches and recordings. I would be comfortably confident in saying that his sales—because of the initial “little” sale—must exceed a half million dollars, and who knows what will happen now that this story is in print!

To quickly elaborate on that “no little sale” point, here’s a “little” real estate story from the past that also makes the point: A young couple contacted several real estate agents in Georgetown, Texas, seeking a place

to rent. Since rentals at the time were almost nonexistent, no one paid any attention to them. Finally, they walked into the office of McLester & Grisham. Instead of being laughed at, they got a bit of encouragement from salesman Dennis Robillard, who said he'd try to help them.

After making two dozen phone calls he found a suitable apartment and helped them move in. They were so appreciative they asked him to find them a permanent home—in the $400,000 price range. The couple had an income of about $10,000 a month from a newly established trucking firm, plus an inheritance of 46,000 acres of land rich with uranium.

Message: Treat everyone as if they are a valuable customer. They are—or they *could* be if they're treated like one.

The Key of Inducement is tremendously important. It can be as little as a smile or pleasantness in dealing with your prospects, or it can be as significant as a cash discount. In my mind I see it as the personal touch, the little courtesies you offer which make it easier for your customers to function in their business and personal lives.

The Most Important Key

The tenth key is, without a doubt, the most important of all the keys. It is the "Key of Sincerity." Chances are excellent that if you are a successful professional salesperson, you've had this experience. Someone bought from you and then said, "You know, I don't really know why I bought from you. I've had three or four people trying to sell me the same product," or "I don't know why I'm dealing with you, because for years I've been dealing with someone else." What they're really saying is, "I *trust* you." They are confirming what I've repeated several times in this book. *The most important part of the sales process is the salesperson.*

If you'll recall, very early in this book I made it clear we would be dealing not only with the sales *process*, but infinitely more important, we would be dealing with the sales*person.* Trust is critical and sincerity is the key that opens the "I trust you" door.

Know the Author

Many years ago Charles Laughton, the famous English actor, was touring America, reading the Bible to large audiences. He was a Shakespearean actor with considerable dramatic skill. I personally never had the privilege of hearing him read the Bible, but indications were great it was a very moving, spiritual experience.

Once, after reading in a small Midwestern community in a large rural church, Laughton's audience was totally and completely silent. It was almost as if God had made a special trip and was there among the people. After what seemed like an eternity but probably involved no more than a minute, a man who must have been about seventy years old stood up and asked for permission to read the Bible. It was granted, and as the old man started to read, it was apparent he was no Shakespearean actor. He did not have the voice, the elocution, or the diction of the great Charles Laughton. As he read, however, it became completely obvious to everyone present that if this had been a Bible-reading contest, the great actor would have finished a distant second. When the evening was over, a reporter went to Charles Laughton and asked how he felt about having participated in such an event; what was his reaction to the old man's reading of the Bible? The English actor thought for a moment, looked at the reporter, and said, *"Well, I knew the script and I knew it well, but this old man knew the Author."*

The point is clear and very simple. The old man had the added advantage of being totally sincere and totally convincing because he had that deep personal belief. With a deep personal belief in what you're selling, you will be able to communicate and transfer that feeling to the prospect, and the Key of Sincerity will help you sell a lot of merchandise. By now it should be crystal clear the sales world is no place for a phony. They just won't make it in the world of professional selling.

Just like the Little Boy across the Street

Of all the sales closes in *Secrets,* this next one—even more than the preceding ones—absolutely demands sincerity.

I've never seen sincerity and integrity more on display than they were in a personal experience my son and I had several years ago. A few days before Christmas, Tom and I went to get a new bicycle for him. Many years ago I could speak bicycle, but today "bicycle" is an entirely different

language. If you don't believe me, just go down to a bicycle shop and listen to the chitchat that takes place.

On this occasion Tom and I went to a Schwinn bicycle shop in North Dallas. The owner was busy with a grandmother and her little grandson, who were looking at a bicycle. The grandmother didn't speak bicycle either, so she had a precise list of exactly what she wanted on a specific bicycle, including the size. The owner of the shop looked at the list and said, "Yes, we have this bicycle and it comes in two sizes. Is the bicycle for this little fellow here?" The grandmother said, "Yes, it is. The little boy across the street has one like it and I want one exactly like his for my grandson."

Owner: "Ma'am, your grandson is too small for this big bicycle and it will not be safe for him to ride. You should get him the other bicycle, which is identical in every way. It is the same price and quality but it is smaller, and your grandson can handle it much more easily. It will be at least three years before it will be safe for him to ride the larger bicycle."

Grandmother: "No way. I want exactly the same bicycle the little boy across the street has. I want the very best for my grandson." Again the owner tried to explain that it *was* the best, it was just smaller, and if her grandson were riding the larger bicycle, he'd have to move so far from side to side he would be unable to control it. The owner patiently pointed out that her grandson could lose control and might fall, and if he happened to be in the street, it could result in a very serious accident. The grandmother was adamant. "No, sir, I want *that* bicycle, right there, exactly like the one the little boy across the street has. If I can't have the one I want, I don't want any."

Then the owner did one of the most beautiful things I've ever seen a *professional* salesman do. It set the standard for what I consider the "professional" in the world of selling. He looked at that grandmother and said, "Ma'am, you're probably going to think I'm crazy, but I cannot sell you the bicycle you want. It would not be safe for your grandson to ride, and if anything should ever happen to him because I sold you a bicycle he could not control, it would be on my conscience." Incredibly enough, the grandmother left in a huff.

The "Integrity" Close

I hope you don't think the owner carried his integrity too far, and deep down I don't think anyone who is interested in building a sales career will feel that way.

Here's a man who can be trusted. I would be willing to send my son into his shop with a check made out to him with the amount left blank. This man has integrity and he really does care about his customers. It's true that the owner missed that sale, but as a direct result of "missing" that one, he has probably made countless others.

The "Signature" Close

Now let's look at the "Signature" Close, which I think is the most powerful close in use today. Since I claim originality, I don't suppose that statement sounds overly modest, but I do hope you will indulge me in a little pride of authorship.

I want to explain that this close will not work for everyone. It would be absurd to use it for low-cost items such as cosmetics, household items, or brushes. However, most companies that sell those items do a lot of recruiting, and with a few changes in terminology which I share with you, this is a powerful approach to get the procrastinator to make a decision.

This close is the final one to use in an interview. It is ineffective if you've been laughing and joking throughout the interview. You must be serious and come across as a sincere person. It will not work if you use it at the beginning of the interview before you establish value. You must use a number of other closes before this one in order to properly prepare your prospect. This is the final effort to get the sale, and when you use the "Signature" Close there is nothing left. It's now or never.

Feel, Felt, Found

You *must* practice, drill, and rehearse *before* you use the "Signature" Close because many times a prospect will say they don't *sign* anything until they talk to their spouse, lawyer, or banker; sleep on it; think about it; etc. You respond with the oldest lead-in of them all: "I know exactly how you *feel*

because for a long time I *felt* exactly the same way. [Pause.] When I analyzed it I *found* that everything I have or own which has any value to me I acquired only after I *signed* my name" (feel, felt, found).

At this point I want to emphasize that I'm going to use a smorgasbord approach and give you far more examples to choose from than you should use. Don't ever use more than three, and if one doesn't fit your own personality or belief system, then don't use it. Caution: Virtually anything new in a tense situation such as closing will make you a little uncomfortable until you master it and make it your own. Don't be *too* judgmental in deciding what to use. Try it—you might like it!

Voice Emphasis on "Signed"

(Now the words after the feel, felt, found introduction.) Here's the way I use it: "Over fifty-six years ago, God gave me a beautiful woman, and I'm one of the truly fortunate men in that I love her infinitely more today than I did the day I got her. I got her because one day, in the presence of witnesses, the minister, and Almighty God, I *signed* my name.

"I had four beautiful children—three daughters and a son. They were all mine, but the doctor would not even let me take them out of the hospital until I had *signed* my name."

Nothing Happens—Until Somebody Signs Something

"I own a lot of life insurance. I bought it because I wanted to make certain if anything happened to me, my family's standard of living would not decline and my wife would not have to go to work unless she wanted to. I was able to protect my family's financial future because on several different occasions, in the presence of a competent salesperson, I *signed* my name.

"I have some investments. I own some real estate, some CDs for emergencies, a little piece of an oil well, and a couple of other investments. I made those investments because I wanted to make certain when the day comes that I am unable to do what I'm doing, I will be able to sit back and take life easy without being a financial burden to anyone. I'll be able to do

that because on many different occasions, in the presence of a salesperson, I *signed* my name."

Now I repeat myself as I say, "As a matter of fact, Mr. Prospect, I've never made any progress of any kind, anywhere, or an acquisition of anything of value until I committed myself by *signing* my name. Mr. Prospect, if I'm reading you right—and I think I am—you're the kind of man who not only likes to make progress but who also likes to do things for your family. You can do both of those things right now by *signing* your name." (Point to the line on the order blank and hand them the pen.)

You Feel Good—Even if You Miss

If the "Signature" Close is properly used, there is nothing else to say. This is that *one* case in which you do not speak until the prospect speaks. There is total silence, but in this specific case, the longer the prospect remains silent the better your chance of making the sale. If there is a significant objection, your prospect will make it known almost immediately.

In every case when I've used the "Signature" Close, whether I made the sale or missed the sale, I've felt good. Obviously, I feel better if I make the sale, but even if I miss it, I feel good because I know I have done everything I can to get a positive decision. That's good because it's important to the ego and feelings of the salesperson to *know* you've done everything you can to get it, so you feel good about *you.* That's important for those future sales interviews.

The "Signature" Close for Recruiting Purposes

In this case you've thoroughly interviewed the prospect and are convinced they can successfully handle your business, but they seem uncertain and want to "think about it" before they "sign up." You: "I know exactly *how you feel* and I'm delighted to see you take such a thoughtful approach to this decision, because as a practical matter, if the decision is not right, then both of us lose. As a matter of fact, I *felt the same way* you do just _____ years ago when I was confronted with the same decision. [Pause.] I *found*

there were many people in the company who had fewer qualifications than I had but who were doing extremely well simply because they had said yes to themselves. They didn't have better skills or abilities, but they did have a better opportunity.

"Think about it, Mr. Prospect. You've never made a single career advancement by standing still and saying no. You didn't acquire your spouse, your children, your home, or your savings account until you *signed* for them. Each step forward—regardless of what you do—involves a commitment on your part. In this particular case your signature, along with my signature, says we are both committed to *your* success. The instant you sign your name the opportunity door swings open, but until you sign it the door is closed and nothing can or will happen. In short, Mr. Prospect, you can open that door right now by *signing* your name." Be quiet. The ball is in their court.

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The “Narrative” Close

To summarize and tie a lot of things together, I’m going to tell you a story which will involve all of the keys we’ve been talking about. This is the “Key of the Narrative Event.” A narrative key or narrative story is the most effective way to use third-party influence to persuade your prospect to take action. These are short vignettes which paint pictures of people or companies that had problems “just like yours [the prospect] and solved their problems by using our goods or services.” Implication: You can buy our goods or services and solve your problem.

My purpose in telling this particular story is to give you, in story form, an overview of this segment of *Secrets of Closing the Sale.* This review is designed to trigger your imagination and memory so you will be able to recall and use more of the information I have shared with you.

One Saturday morning in Columbia, South Carolina, when my son Tom was three and a half years old, I walked into the den and said, “Let’s go to the grocery store. I’ve got to buy some groceries.” He said, “OK, Daddy,” hopped up, and slipped on his little boots, and we drove down to the store. As we walked into the store, I turned right to pick up a grocery cart, but Tom had seen a display of rubber balls, so he made a beeline for them. He grabbed one of those rubber balls, ran over, and popped it into the shopping basket.

Four Keys in Four Seconds

Now I’ve never talked at great length to my son about this particular little trip, but I’ve got an idea that when I said, “Son, let’s go to the grocery

store," one of the reasons he was so enthusiastic about going was he had an idea. In his little mind he figured if he got his daddy down to that grocery store, he was going to get himself something. He probably didn't know what it was going to be, but he figured it would be something. He was using the Key of Positive Projection. Once we entered the store my son also used the Key of the Assumptive Attitude, as well as the Key of Enthusiasm and the Key of Physical Action. He "assumed" he was going to get that ball, so he took "physical action" with a great deal of "enthusiasm." In five seconds he used four more keys on me!

What Would You Have Done?

I took the ball out of the basket and said, "Son, you've already got a dozen balls and you don't need another one, so take it back," and I put it into his hands. With that my son looked straight at me and said, "Daddy, can I just hold the ball?"

Question: What would you have done? Remember, now, my son was just three and a half years old. What kind of daddy would I have been to say, "No, son, you can't even hold the ball; now take it back!"? My son did not want to buy the ball; he just wanted to hold it, and all he had done was ask me a very simple "Subordinate Question." (You don't ask for the sale; you ask for the appointment. On the appointment you ask for the sale. You don't ask for the good-night kiss; you ask for the date. On the date you sell the good-night kiss.)

So I said, "OK, son, you can hold it, but don't get any ideas. You're not going to buy it. You've already got a dozen and you just don't need another one." We walked around shopping for a few minutes and came back by the display of rubber balls. I took the ball out of my son's hands, put it back in the display, and said, "Son, that's long enough. You're going to fool around, drop it, get it dirty, and then Dad'll have to buy it, and you simply do not need another ball."

That's Quite an Inducement

Apparently my son was not listening when I said no, because he ran back around me, took that ball out of the display, and popped it right back in the basket. He was a “Persistent” little salesman, any way you look at it. Well, I’m kind of persistent myself, so I took the ball back out of the basket and headed for the display to put it back, talking as I was walking. “Son, for the last time, Dad’s already told you you’ve got a dozen balls; you just don’t need another one.” As I was walking and talking, I looked down and there he stood—all thirty-nine pounds of him. He looked up at me and said (at that time he talked with a slight lisp), “Daddy, wis you buy me that ball. I’ll give you a tiss.”

When you think about it for a moment, he was offering quite an “Inducement.” He was offering himself. What else could a three-and-a-half-year-old give his daddy but a part of himself? Since it was in the immediate future, it was an “Impending Event.” And “Sincere”—in all of my years of selling, I have never known a more sincere salesman than that three-and-a-half-year-old.

You already know how the story ends, but I’ll go ahead and tell you. That day in the Ziglar household we had thirteen rubber balls!

At this point I need to correct something. In chapter 32, I said to you I had never seen that a woman had given birth to a salesman. Actually, that’s not *quite* true, because on February 1, 1965, in Columbia, South Carolina, the local paper carried a small headline which read, “Birth of a Salesman Announced. Mr. and Mrs. Zig Ziglar announce the birth of a salesman, John Thomas Ziglar, born February 1, Providence Hospital, 9:08 p.m.” Now I don’t want you to get the wrong idea. I am not trying to influence my boy’s career. I mean, he can *sell* anything he wants to!

That’s my message to you. If you will buy these ideas and use the keys, procedures, and techniques we’ve been sharing, I sincerely believe you can sell more of the goods or services you are selling.

Closing Chapter

Your Dream Team and Investors: Keys to Exponential Business Growth

BY KEVIN HARRINGTON

The secrets Zig and I have shared with you will multiply your sales success—guaranteed. They've been proven for decades across every industry and in every application. Follow these secrets, reengage them repeatedly until they become second nature, and you will sell more.

But if your journey ended here, you'd be stopping short of the next level of breakthrough success that could come true for you. Right now, your arsenal of closes is bursting. You probably can't wait to get out there and start making sales happen! But the secrets aren't over yet.

If there's one thing I've learned on my way to over five billion dollars in sales, it's this: success is not a solo act. Growth requires a team. You can't do it alone. No one can. After your first round of success using the secrets you've just encountered, it's going to be tempting to believe you can be a solo trailblazer and the rewards will continue to grow, but it doesn't work that way.

Success requires scaling to be sustainable, and scaling needs solid support. So, to get to the next level, to experience 10X success or even 100X success, you need to challenge your current way of thinking and learn to do things differently. You need to tap into the strengths of others and learn to lead. The good news is that all the selling lessons you've learned will also apply here as you continually sell your team, investors, and partners on your vision and direction.

Zig knew this and shared this story on the wisdom of creative team building:

> A man came home one evening, and his little 7-year-old son was doing a little work out in the backyard. He was building a fort. There was one heavy post the youngster was trying to move,

struggling and straining and trying so hard to lift it.

His dad watched him a couple of minutes and he said, “Son, use all your strength,” and the little boy looked up and he said, “Daddy, you know I’m trying. I am using all of my strength.”

The dad said, “No, son, you’re not using all your strength.”

“Yes, I am! I tried hard.”

“Well, son, you didn’t ask me to help you. You didn’t use my strength.”

The idea of the self-made man is a myth. As you succeed in sales, you may well find that you need to also learn how to grow a business around your selling efforts—you may need to become an entrepreneur. Now not every salesperson will become, or should become, an entrepreneur, but success in selling often leads you there. And empowering entrepreneurs is my personal passion. I’ve been in the trenches with entrepreneurs for the last thirty years, growing businesses of my own and helping others to do the same thing.

I often get stopped in an airport by budding entrepreneurs who ask me this question: *Kevin, what’s the single most important thing I can do to grow my business?* Without knowing anything about their situation, I confidently share the one thing that everyone who wants to grow must do: lose the solo mindset and build a dream team.

Reid Hoffman, LinkedIn cofounder, put it this way. “No matter how brilliant your mind or strategy, if you’re playing a solo game, you’ll always lose out to a team.”[1] If you want to achieve extraordinary results, building a dream team will position you for exponential success.

There’s only so much of you to go around, and you’re not an expert in everything. That’s why you need a team you can trust to take your sales success to the next level. Now, some of you reading this may choose to stay put as a solo act. That’s fine—if that’s what you really want. The truth is that everyone who sells anything needs a support team no matter how great their ambitions may be. Online marketing guru Jeff Walker says that one of his biggest business mistakes was not building a team earlier in his growth process.[2] I just don’t want you to hold back because you’re uncertain about building a team or fearful of what might go wrong.

You don’t have to reinvent the wheel to do this. I want to empower you to boldly pursue your dreams. It’s what I’ve done for entrepreneurs for decades. And let’s face it. Everyone who sells anything has at least a little bit of entrepreneur inside. As part of my passion for empowering entrepreneurs to greatness, I created a one-stop small business center early

in my career to help them build teams without spending a fortune in payroll. I still do a lot of this sort of consulting today.

It's never been easier to build a dream team by harnessing the power of virtual workspaces and the gig economy. I'll share some of the secrets and stories from my own experience in this chapter so you can grow faster and avoid making the most common mistakes. Every entrepreneur needs to be a salesperson, but not every salesperson is necessarily an entrepreneur or has all the business savvy and skills necessary to grow to the next level. That's why they need to team with those who do.

You may need to team within your own corporate world. You may need to team with friends or even family members to push your success to the next level, or you may need to seek some investment capital to take your proven idea, product, or service to the next level—and every investor will want to know more about your dream team.

If you don't have one, you need to figure out how to assemble one. The bottom line is, we all need a team because success is not a solo act.

Harness the Power of the Gig Economy

A common mistake budding salespeople-turned-entrepreneurs make is to think that they *must* hire full-time employees in order to grow. But that's never been the case. Yes, there comes a time when full-time employees make sense, but it's never been easier to add the talent you need a little at a time until you're ready to commit to adding full-time employees. And it's all because of the gig economy.

The rise of the gig economy is part of the magic of the internet age. More people than ever can work remotely or as freelancers. As a result, these experts will offer you their occupational talents or consultation for a limited amount of time until the next "gig." As of now, almost 150 million in America and Western Europe make up this workforce—and it's growing larger every day. I've even heard it suggested that up to half of the workforce will be working independently in just a few years. Concrete payrolls are becoming a thing of the past. So, as you begin to scale your success, throw out the thinking that you need to hire full-time people to get started. You can scale up a little at a time based on your need.

Essentially, you can rent what you need *before* you decide to own. It's commonplace now to take someone on as a consultant or freelancer before adding them officially to the team. This trial process also lets you get to know people better to ensure they're a good fit for your culture, values, and character. It minimizes the risk of knowing who you can trust when you can work alongside someone on a project or two before committing to anything long term. It doesn't matter what your business needs—finance, operations, marketing, creatives, coaches, and mentors—your dream team members are all closer than you think.

Teamwork begins with a mindset shift. You have to stop thinking like a solo act and start thinking like a team leader. Everyone's team needs will look a little different. Sometimes you'll need a little ingenuity to get all the right people connected. No one climbs the ladder of success without connection. As you're planning, don't be afraid to collaborate.

Here are three keys to making important connections:

1. Listen to an Amazing Mentor

Over the years, my list of mentors has been long — Arnold Morris, Mark Burnett, and Richard Branson, to name a few. Each of them came into my life unexpectedly as a result of my reaching out. Darren Hardy says, "Never seek advice from someone you wouldn't trade places with." I took that lesson and learned to reach out to multiple mentors I respected.

These mentoring relationships help you in multiple ways. A good mentor doesn't just tell you what to do. They teach you how to come to wise conclusions on your own by knowing your strengths, recognizing your weaknesses, and asking good questions. They are your sounding board. They offer a fresh perspective with years of time-tested experience. They may even let you make decisions that don't pan out in exchange for the lesson that it teaches you. Your plan will be stronger for their criticism, questioning, and conversation.

2. Leverage the Knowledge of Experts

According to leadership guru John C. Maxwell, "The best way a mentor can prepare another leader is to expose him or her to other great people." Mentors are individuals you look up to for their guidance and experience.

They could be from various fields, but a special connection for organic growth has formed, catalyzed by your reaching out.

Experts are from a specific arena and have already taken the successful steps that you want to emulate. Many people look to them for how best to proceed because their numbers prove their expertise. Don't be afraid to reach up as high as you can as you reach out. You want to find someone who can push you to succeed. Whenever I start something new, I find the best in the industry and start with that person to learn all I can, so I can avoid a lot of mistakes on the front end.

3. Unlock the Insight on Your Team

The mark of a truly successful entrepreneur isn't how they listen to those higher up on the ladder, but how they listen to peers, teammates, and even customers. Maybe they don't have as much experience as your mentor or experts in the field. But they have something those others don't—skin in the game.

They know your product; maybe they even want to buy your product. If you've drawn up a good map, they know where you are going; they have bought in and want to see you succeed. If they notice problems—or report that your product isn't solving their problems—you'll want to listen up. Mentors and experts will serve you well in the big picture, but for the detailed insights, ask your industry peers.

Getting the Money You Need to Grow

At some point on your growth journey, you may discover you need a little something to grow to the next level—money! I get it. I've taken over fifty thousand pitches throughout my career, on *Shark Tank* and beyond. I've also given quite a few myself to raise capital for my own ventures. So, when it comes to getting the money you need to achieve your dreams, I can help.

Securing capital is selling. That's the good news, because in these pages you have the sales secrets from both Zig, the Master of Sales, and me. As a result, you're already light years ahead of most people, because you know how to sell and you're getting better every day as you practice, practice,

practice. To secure the money you need to get your dream off the ground, you'll need others to believe in it—and put their money where their trust is. At the core, closing the sale with investors is no different than any other sale. The same secrets you just learned will work with investors too when applied in the right way.

When you need money to grow your business efforts, I can help you apply those secrets in a proven, structured method I call Ten Steps to the Perfect Pitch. Now, I know Zig advised never using the word *pitch* when selling, and I completely agree. *Pitch* is a business-insider term used in the investment community, not a term you should be using with your customers.

I know, however, from decades of experience on both sides of the bargaining table—both as an entrepreneur looking for investment and as an investor looking for a winning product—that the key to attracting investors is your pitch. And not just any pitch will do: you need the perfect pitch. Through years of success and failure, I've honed the perfect-pitch process to ten steps:

1. Start with the "Tease"

The "Tease" step is where you "set the hook" and plant the seed that captures the person's attention in the first place. Reveal and demonstrate the need as graphically as you can by talking about the problem your idea, product, or service solves. Remember, a little showmanship is valuable here. This step sets the pace for the rest of your presentation.

2. Follow Up with the "Please"

In the "Please" step, you demonstrate how your product or service will totally solve the problem revealed in the "Tease" step—preferably in the most efficient, elegant, or cost-effective manner. Tell them why what you are selling is better than any other product or service in the marketplace. And be sure to cover as many features and benefits of your product as possible. I like to demonstrate a "magical transformation" to provide the WOW factor. (Think of Billy Mays showing how OxyClean gets stains out.)

3. Show Your Idea, Product, or Service in Action

A powerful demonstration is one—if not the—key to a successful presentation and should be practiced until you can do it in your sleep. Showing the multi-functionality of your product will give you massive bonus points as well. If your product serves several functions, be sure to showcase each one of them.

4. Accelerate the Value of What You Are Selling

If you've watched any well-done infomercial you've probably heard the expression "But wait, there's more!" If you've presented properly, you've already at least halfway convinced the person that your product or service is simply a no-brainer to fund. But then, by adding, "But wait . . . there's more!" you add value that pushes them over the top. If you truly believe that what you are selling is something the world needs, give your customers as much value as you possibly can.

5. Provide Rock-Solid Testimonials

There is no better "social proof" that your product or service does what it says it does than third-party testimonials. You can sing the praises of your own product until you're blue in the face, but providing rock-solid proof from other people is vital to creating the perfect pitch.

There are five main types of testimonials to use to touch both the heart and the head, emotion and logic:

Consumer Testimonial: This will be from someone who uses the product and is generally emotion centered. Your consumer will share about how they use it, why they love it, how it's changed their life.

Professional Testimonial: Here you can appeal to the logic and science behind your product. Your audience will feel practically informed as well as emotionally moved. Whoever has a socially trusted—and topically relevant—position of authority can speak into your advertising pitch.

Clinical Testimonial: If you have a product that can be tested in a lab, the clinical testimonial will add another logical appeal, similar to the

professional. Scientific stamps of approval establish trust and credibility.

Editorial Testimonial: This testimonial boasts both logic and emotion. A report or review of your product could be in a newspaper, a magazine, or TV show and can cover several other third-party endorsements at once. Celebrity involvement, scientific study, and customer reviews could all be included. You can't buy yourself into the *New York Times* or the *Wall Street Journal*, so people will be more likely to trust the author's opinion.

Celebrity Testimonial: You're stepping up the ladder of influence now, so we're going to spend a little more time here. How many times have you seen a product on TV or in a magazine ad next to the smiling face of a celebrity? Endorsement by well-known figures has been an element of the sales trade for decades. Why has it continued to be prevalent? Because it works. Consumers will respond and it's really just simple psychology.

Advice on Working with Celebrities

From time to time, you may want to leverage the power of celebrity endorsements to drive sales and grow your business. I've worked with quite a few celebrity endorsers over the years. These can be actual A-lister celebs or your everyday "influencer." They are people with substantial or particular niche followings, whether amassed from previous work or through blogs, social media apps, YouTube, or similar platforms. When they speak up about a product or organization, people listen. As with investors, a celebrity partnership will require you to pitch your product and plan before they will buy in.

If you've seen infomercials, you know that on-camera hosts and endorsers don't have to be big-name celebrities. Tony Little wasn't on anyone's radar when we did his first infomercial in 1990, but he had a pitch and it was powerful. So powerful, in fact, that the product, an exercise video called *Target Training*, sold seven million copies! We followed that up with his Ab Isolator exercise device and that sold seven million, as well. Tony was certainly not a celebrity when we produced the shows—but he became one as a result.

Now I've worked with Tony Little in fitness, Jack LaLanne in juicers, George Foreman, Frankie Avalon, Vanna White, Sherman Helmsley, Billy

Mays, Dick Clark, and many more. I can't share all the stories, but this one is a good example of how the right celebrity endorser can make a difference.

If you've seen the movie *Catch Me if You Can* or are in the bank security business, you can't forget the name Frank Abagnale. His is the true story of a teenager who managed to pass himself off as an airline pilot, a lawyer, and even a doctor heading an emergency-room staff. He figured out how to create such authentic-looking checks that banks and hotels never spotted them as phony.

When I partnered with the Affinion Group to promote an identity-theft protection program, our arrangements included Frank Abagnale as infomercial host. Now you might be thinking, why use the most successful con artist in history to endorse your product? Well, Frank had been using his skills for good, carving a career for himself as a respected consultant to the FBI, banks, and businesses.

Frank arrived at the shoot looking a little reserved but sprang to life as soon as he stepped in front of that camera. On the live infomercial, he asked if we knew about the little red flags on mailboxes. He shared that as a young man he would go into neighborhoods and actually look for those little flags—to grab outgoing mail, because they often contained sizable checks.

He showed us exactly how he could take an authentic check, wash off all written ink, and replace the information with his name and any amount of money. It was amazing and unnerving all at once. As an engaging, knowledgeable infomercial host, Frank became an overnight star. The product was valuable and impressive in its own right; with Frank Abagnale presenting and explaining it, sales boomed. We showed the problem; he gave a solution; the viewer understood identity theft—credibility, charisma, and crucial information all in one.

You may think, *Hiring a celebrity endorsement would be too expensive for my business*. Think again. Celebrities don't *have* to cost an arm and a leg if you have a creative mindset and a little flexibility. Look for hometown heroes whom your community loves or local sport legends, like Mike Alstott. He played for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers for over a decade and was one of my football idols—a great person on and off the field. But he was also great in the game of business, working in the marketplace as a celebrity entrepreneur.

I knew that I wanted Mike in on a project and that he appreciated creativity in deal-structuring. So, we went looking to make it a win-win for everyone. Instead of a cut of sales right at the beginning, Mike agreed to take a piece of product equity. Mike's likability and fan base provided our product with consumer appeal and credibility. For Mike, the success of the product would keep on giving.

Deals like this have taught me over the years that there are at least two ways to structure endorsement payments.

1. Write them a big check up front. And, yes, that way can be costly if you're working with a big name.
2. Ask if you can pay when the product and the project rolls out, meaning now you're putting good money after good. It's already tested; it's working; it's going to continue to do good things for all of you.

Now, back to your Ten Steps to the Perfect Pitch.

6. Highlight Your Research and Competitive Analysis

Your investor prospect will want to see that you've done your research on your product or service itself, your industry, your target market (including size, demographics, and psychographics), and your competition. The more data—facts, figures, and statistics—you can present in your pitch, the better.

This information proves, without a doubt, why your product or service is unique and how it alone solves a particular problem better than any other solution in the current marketplace. It also shows that you've done your due diligence and you are well positioned in the marketplace.

7. Reveal Your Dream Team

This is the group you've been building for a while now, one you hope this investor will be excited to join. They want to know that you have expert input in key areas and that you listen well to avoid mistakes. It's vital to have your dream team in place before making your pitch.

Other members of your dream team may include a board of directors or advisors, legal advisors, accountants or financial advisors, industry experts/analysts, social media or marketing experts, and other industry-specific guides. A well-defined team will assure your investor that a partnership is the right move for their success.

8. Show Why You Need the Money

This step is fairly self-explanatory but often missed: How will you use the money that is invested in you? If you aren't clear on your needs and how you'll use the money, it will be difficult for an investor to get behind your plan. Here are some questions to consider:

How are you going to use the proceeds if advanced to you?
Why are you raising capital?
Are you expanding operations?
Are you investing in more inventory?
Are you hiring staff to build the business?
Are you buying new operations machinery?

Investors want to know where their money will be going and to make sure it's used wisely. They also want to know there's a concrete plan to pay it back!

9. Outline Your Marketing Plan

A marketing plan goes along with an investor's desire to see how their money will be utilized. How are you going to get the word about your product or service out to your marketplace? How are you going to generate "buzz"? What's your plan for distributing your product or service to the world? An investor will need a full understanding of how that will work before buying in.

10. Ask for the Money!

At this point it's time to move in for the "kill." You've presented your case like the highest-paid lawyer on Wall Street. You've removed all doubts

that any investor might have at this point about funding your deal. If you're on *Shark Tank*, at least one of the sharks is foaming at the mouth to partner with you on your deal.

So now it's time for the "seize" phase of your perfect pitch: you have to make the ask! When you do, ask with confidence and remember that your idea, product, or service has the potential to change the world.

BONUS Step!

I almost decided against including this secret tip here because it's so powerful and persuasive, it could really give you an unfair advantage over everyone else. It could virtually seal your deal, no further questions asked. It could blow away any of your competition vying for the investor's attention and funding.

If you want to get an investor worked up into a frenzy to fund your dream, here's what to do: add an "accelerated payback" option to your proposal—an even faster way for an investor to get their money back after funding your deal.

Investors hear a ton of pitches. That's why you really need something different here, something really, personally valuable. If you watch *Shark Tank*, you'll see most of the contestants making the same lame mistake over and over again. They simply offer the Sharks a percentage stake in their company for a set amount of funds, say a 10 percent equity stake in their company for $200,000.

But here's the deal: you can't spend equity! The investor has to hope that the funded company will generate huge revenues that the Shark can then get a piece of eventually—in this case, only 10 percent. But what if the company doesn't generate those revenues, even with the Shark's expertise and assistance? In that scenario, the investor is always the last one to get paid. While the company owner(s) and employees are drawing salaries, bonuses, etc., and living just fine, the investor can get left out in the cold, if the company is not generating revenues above and beyond expenses. And if the company never makes any revenues, then they may have to wait until the company is sold or liquidated to get any worthwhile money back at all.

Obviously, this is not a good position for any investor to be in. That's why an investor on *Shark Tank* might counteroffer with something like this: "I'll give you your $200,000, but I want one dollar for every unit sold until

I get my money back, and THEN I get the 10 percent equity as a kicker!" That's a great example of accelerated payback.

If you really want to impress an investor, think ahead and remember the core secret: you can have everything in life you want if you will just help enough other people (in this case, investors) get what they want.

There you have it: Ten Steps to the Perfect Pitch (plus the Bonus Step that in and of itself could make you a millionaire). You now have the basics of the real-world, insider secrets of what it takes to be successful on Shark Tank or how to get your deal funded with an investor. (I offer more in-depth resources and training to empower you at KevinHarrington.tv.)

It's never been easier to get the money you need in this digital era where almost anything is possible—quickly. There's just no excuse for any salesperson-turned-entrepreneur not to just "go for it"—to finally take action to achieve those dreams.

The Nine Essential Parts of a Winning Business Plan

One thing every investor is going to want to see before they give you a dime is a winning business plan. Let me offer a little advice on the essential parts to getting this right.

Incredibly, out of those fifty thousand pitches I've taken over the years, about 90 percent of them didn't have a decent business plan. And the answer was "No!" A good business plan not only helps you get capital as needed, but also gives you clarity on your direction and allows you to easily share the plan with your entire team.

Each plan should be adapted to your unique needs but also have these nine critical elements:

1. Executive Summary

The executive summary provides the highlights of the entire business plan and answers these questions:

What's the problem?
What's the solution?
What's the industry?

Who’s on the team?
What’s your progress to date?
What are you looking for from your investor?

The executive summary is generally a one- or two-page snapshot that gives an investor or partner the chance to see that you have clarity on your own business. You have to be able to explain the *Who? What? Where? When? How? Why? How much?* in one or two pages—anything longer and you will lose the attention of your investor. A well-written executive summary can get investors excited about the rest of the business plan, pull them in, and leave them wanting to read more.

2. Market Description

The market description takes the overview of the executive summary a little further. It’s really a detailed description of the product, the service, and the problem it solves. This is the meat of the business. For example, if I asked you, “What’s your market?” you’d want to be specific with your answer: “I’m in the pet industry, and it’s an eighty-billion-dollar industry and growing at [this rate].” This industry overview begins to give the investor a description of the product or service, why it’s unique in the marketplace, and how knowledgeable you are about it.

3. Competitive Analysis

The competitive analysis is important because if there are five other companies doing exactly what you do, and they’re at the same price, why would an investor want to invest in you? This is where you show why you are going to be successful. Get back to the description of the product or service and answer this question: “Why is your product or service unique among your competitors?”

In a competitive analysis, you’re going to show that there is a problem and that you solve that problem differently than any other product or service. Investors want to know, “Is your product or service unique enough that no other product or service solves the problem in a similar fashion?” If you can achieve that goal, you’re really talking about something fantastic that gives you a specific edge in the marketplace. Solving the problem is

good, but specifying exactly why you're unique in solving that problem is the key.

4. Sales and Marketing Plan

The sales and marketing plan is where the rubber meets the road. You answer specific questions like these:

What techniques are you going to use to get customers in the door?
Are you going to use TV?
Are you going to use radio?
Are you going to use social media?
Are you going to use influencers, digital marketing, Facebook, Instagram?
Where are you going to spend the money on marketing?
How will you spend an investor's money?

In your marketing plan, be sure to consider the sales cycle, the compensation, the cost per acquisition of the customer, how you do branding, and your distribution system. This section must be specific and detailed in order to be effective. Get down to the dollars and cents of where the money will be spent to show investors that you have a clear plan.

5. Proof of Concept

The proof of concept is where you show investors that you know your product is legitimate, because you've sold it in the marketplace. Often people think they have a great product. But then I ask, "Where have you sold it?" I can't invest in you just because you have a feeling it's going to be a big winner.

Proof of concept provides answers to these questions: Where have you sold your idea, product, or service? Do you know who your target customer is? How do you know that people are willing to pay the money that you say that product costs? Investors need to know that there's some kind of test pattern.

A lot of companies do a test on Facebook and put their idea out there. They spend $500 or $1,000 advertising and see what the Facebook

customers are saying. If you spend $2,000 on Facebook and bring back $5,000 in sales, that's called proof of concept. Also, by going on Facebook you can target 1,800-plus different target points. Investors will want to invest in your business when they know you understand the market, the demographics, and how to get to that ideal customer.

6. Operations

Up to this point I've been talking about a lot of start-up stuff and planning. Now, let's assume you're in business and need to operate the business. The operations piece describes the management structure, the technology, and who's going to be doing all the work. If you are an entrepreneur like me, you're probably good at all of those things like planning, the proof of concept, and finding out who your customer is. But now you've got to actually run the business.

You may need some help. Describe who's going to do the banking, the order processing, the fulfillment, customer service, and all the operational parts of the business. As you get into this operations plan, investors want to know that you're not just some pie-in-the-sky dreamer with an idea. They want to know that you've got a solid team surrounding you who can get things done. The successful entrepreneur needs a top-notch operations team to surround them with this expertise to bring home the win.

7. People

In this piece, you now detail the actual people on your dream team. Who is going to be your CFO, your COO, on your board of directors, on your board of advisors? Leverage the talent of your management, board of advisors, and board of directors, and put together the best people who give you the experience and the credibility that you need to succeed as an entrepreneur.

8. Financial Projections

What is a projection? It's predicting what you hope will happen. But financial projections have to be realistic. You can't ask for a million dollars to make a million dollars. You also shouldn't ask for a million dollars and

project $100 million in sales the first year. A realistic projection falls somewhere in between.

Financial projections show that your marketing plan has a direct correlation to your sales volume. This is what I call knowing your numbers. The key is to establish the lifetime value of your customer. What's the cost to acquire a customer (CAQ)? A CFO has a fiduciary responsibility to all of those who are part of the team to have reasonable, solid projections that make sense, that can be documented and validated with facts and figures and historical data from other companies in the industry. Solid financial projections give you your budgets, your salaries, your percentages, all the things that you need to launch your business and assure investors that you are running a tight ship.

9. The Risk Analysis

Risk analysis shows the investors that you are aware of and have a plan to deal with risks.

Are there any environmental risks?
Are there any competitive risks?
Is the competition much bigger, stronger, more financially sound?
Are you in an industry that requires government approvals?

Put all the risks in this section, because investors will already be asking themselves why they *shouldn't* invest. Your job is to address those risks honestly and show them that you have a plan for minimizing their risk and why a partnership would be to their advantage. The important thing here is making sure that the investor or the owners of the company have a clear plan to build the business, get the right team, and have a way for all the investors to get out in a positive fashion. An exit strategy assures investors that you have a plan for them to get their money out.

Bottom line: your business plan doesn't need to be complicated, but it does need to show your business in a positive way. Following these steps will automatically position you in the top 10 percent of entrepreneurs and will provide a solid plan for you to partner with willing investors.

Profitable Partnerships: My Own Secret Sauce

No one ever wakes up one day with all the necessary skills and resources to succeed. It takes time—and it takes partners. In fact, the key to my achieving such high sales numbers comes down to my ability to assemble profitable partnerships. Partnerships are a great way to get more information, leverage know-how, and open opportunities. Partnerships allow you to multiply your time and assets exponentially to achieve your goals faster.

There are different forms of partnerships, but they're all crucial to get you where you need to be in business and in life.

Picking the right partner is a little like getting married. Sometimes we allow our instincts and emotions to rule and congratulate ourselves afterward on the keenness of our instincts. Sometimes, we live to regret that we did not allow ourselves to see a situation or people more clearly. Some of my partnerships have turned out to be highly profitable. Some have turned out to be—well, let's just say, not the most pleasant experiences.

As your sales prowess and business acumen increase, here are some things to remember when forming partnerships:

1. Potential Partners Are Everywhere

Your industry is an interconnected web. But you have to be bold. The only people who will come to you will be those who want to be at your level. People on the levels above you will require that you invest determined action.

One of these practical actions is to inquire with organizations you have hired onto your team. These are lawyers, legal teams, and even web producers and digital media groups. If they're working with you then they're probably working with other people in your industry. Ask them if you can get connected.

When I first partnered with the Home Shopping Channel they had fifty thousand vendors. Quickly, I had access to not only this extensive list of vendors but also their statistics. Which were the most popular? What was their reach? Who sold the most dollars per minute on an average basis, day to day, week to week, month to month? With this we were able to whittle

fifty thousand down to the top five hundred and then go in for powerful deals.

One overarching partnership had thrown open the floodgates to connection, information, and the understanding of where to best focus my time and energy. It was saving me money. It was saving me time and it was positioning my company for huge future wins.

If fear is keeping you from these successes, remember these things. First, everyone is out to make a connection. You're not the only one out there looking. If you reach out and they say no, you'll only be in the same position where you started—but with proven determination. On the other hand, if they say yes, you can change the future of your business forever. The benefits are so worth the risk. Finally, the more partnerships you establish, the greater the chance that the *next* guy says yes. You could start an absolute avalanche of connection.

2. Partners Affect Your Value—for Better or for Worse

Like the old fable says, "A man will be known by the company he keeps." If your partner is untrustworthy and hard to deal with, outsiders will associate you with those qualities. On the other hand, if they have credibility, knowledge, and influence in your industry, your business value will also increase. Your partner's resources can become your resources and vice versa.

One year when I was running into problems acquiring capital from the banks, I turned to a knowledgeable connection—a former bank president. Line after line of credit, we had been denied. His expert response? "You're not packaged properly." He knew what banks needed to see. And it was beyond good past and present numbers. We needed projections, plans, and a solid dream team. Good management gives banks the confidence to believe that you are going to move forward.

So in keeping with his advice, we brought in new team members, including a top lawyer, a top operations person, and the former bank president himself! We powerfully repackaged the company—made possible by an expert partnership—and went back to the banks, where we finally saw success. In fact, one that had turned us down previously approved a $3 million line of credit.

3. Partners Require Perspective

You know what you want. And you know what you'd like to achieve through an advantageous partnership. But do you know what *they* want? No one is going to partner with you just for kicks. To truly set up a win-win environment that a potential partner gets excited about, you will have to put yourselves in their shoes. Understand their perspective, their motivation, their goals, fears, loves, and so on.

After starting a new company division, I needed a new investor. So, I thought through my recent connections and approached our phone center. Interesting move? Watch how it turned out. I said, "We'll give you an *exclusive* contract to take our phone calls. It will be just you for *x* period of time. And in return, we'd like for you to invest an amount of money back into all kinds of existing suppliers, fulfillment centers, media buyers, phone centers, customer service centers, etc." We offered limited-time, exclusive rights to certain aspects of our relationship with them. One-sided partnerships just won't work.

So, ask yourself, What wins can *I* provide new partners so that their time and energy are well spent—and all of our success gets multiplied?

Never Quit

You now have a clear success path laid out for you, although as Zig said earlier, you'll want to revisit these pages often, mark them up, and actually put this book to use in the field of life. It won't always be easy, that's for sure. But the one thing you can never do is quit.

One of my favorite Zig stories is about the day he almost did just that:

> It was on a hot August afternoon in 1947. It happened on Adelia Drive in Columbia, South Carolina. I'd been knocking on doors all afternoon, and nobody would let me in. I made a solemn vow that if I didn't at least get into a house by the time I got to Devine Street, I was going to quit. I'd been working 10 days and had not sold anything.
>
> I knocked on the door of Mrs. B. C. Dickert, and she said, "Well, you know, it sounds interesting, but my sister-in-law, Mrs. J. O. Freeman, lives next door, and I know she'd be interested. Why don't you go talk to her, and if she looks at it, just call me over?"
>
> So, I literally ran next door—that was the first word of encouragement I'd heard all day—and I talked to Mrs. Freeman. She said, "Well, I'd want my husband to see it."
>
> So, I said, "Well, I'll come back tonight." So, I got back that night, and Mr. and Mrs. Freeman invited Mrs. Dickert over. I finished the presentation, and I can tell you that it was set number 541, that it cost $61.45, that the down payment was $16.45, and that when I sold the Freemans, I

was so enamored and excited that I just flat forgot that Mrs. Dickert even lived. I just ignored her.

And finally, Mr. Freeman said, “Mr. Ziglar, I believe that if you were to talk to Mrs. Dickert, she might buy a set.”

And so, with considerable sales technique and skill, I said, “What about it, Mrs. Dickert?” She said, “Well, I don’t have my checkbook, even.” And again, with considerable diplomacy, I said, “Well, shoot, you just live next door. Go get it!” And she went next door, so I made two sales that night.

We lived in a little upstairs apartment, and I didn’t hit more than two steps on the way up that night. My wife knew that something had happened. I tell you, we were just elated! We jumped up and down and laughed and celebrated by buying two quarts of ice cream!

And as they say, the rest is history. The world has never seen a salesperson like Zig Ziglar. Zig always loved to say, “You were born to win, but to be a winner you must plan to win, prepare to win, and expect to win.” By reading this book, you are doing just that. The world needs all you have to offer—your passion, talents, and unique perspective.

There is no better time than right now to take these amazing closes from Zig—and your bonus tips—and achieve exponential success. It’s time to take your potential *over the top*—starting right now.

---

1. Reid Hoffman, *The Start-up of You* (New York: Random House, 2012), 83.
2. “The Biggest Mistake I Made in My Business (So Far),” YouTube video, posted by “Jeff Walker,” July 13, 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o_BoT1d7aF0.

Acknowledgments

Secrets of Closing the Sale has made me even more aware of my indebtedness to the tens of thousands of salespeople who have gone before me. These pioneers blazed new frontiers, opened new doors, learned new procedures, and established the credibility of the profession. To a large degree these men and women left me a heritage which I proudly claim.

When you start to say thank you in a book of this kind, you invariably leave out some important contributors. If I have overlooked you, and others who have meant so much to this work, it's simply an indication of another of my human frailties. Please know that your efforts and help are appreciated, and I apologize in advance for not including you.

I start with my friend Bill Cranford, to whom I dedicated this book. He taught me the first principles of professional selling. Mr. P. C. Merrell also taught me some important sales principles and "sold" me the idea that I could be a sales champion. My surrogate father, Mr. John Anderson, and my first free-enterprise mentor, Mr. Walton Haining, taught me a great deal about getting along with people and communicating with them on their level. I believe that *Secrets of Closing the Sale* qualifies as a unique book if for no other reason than the fact that I have been so ably assisted by a number of truly outstanding people and one major company which unselfishly shared a considerable amount of its research.

Heading that list would be Mike Frank of Columbus, Ohio; Billie Engman of San Mateo, California; D. John Hammond of Phoenix, Arizona; and Bernie Lofchick of Winnipeg, Canada. I say without hesitation that with the aid of the four of them I must have made a minimum of three hundred changes in what I have written. Not only were they generous in their praise, but more importantly, they were constructive in their evaluation and enthusiastic with their positive suggestions to make the book more effective for you. In several cases their help enabled me to keep some egg off my face. Though I do mention each one several times, I want to

emphasize that without their help, combined with the significant contributions of the others, this book would not be as effective as it is.

When the manuscript was roughly 80 percent complete, I sent these people copies and asked them for evaluations, suggestions, and additions, as well as corrections. Each went above and beyond just being close friends in their zeal and enthusiasm for helping. I asked them specifically because, without exception, they have outstanding sales backgrounds and a combined knowledge that surpasses any group with which I've had the privilege of working. Each one made not just one or two but literally dozens of invaluable suggestions.

I am also indebted to Mrs. Juanell Teague of Dallas, Texas, and Gerhard Gschwandtner, publisher of *Personal Selling Power*, as well as Phil Lynch and Bryan Flanagan of Dallas. Their suggestions and insights were extremely helpful.

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My thanks also extend to the entire staff of the Zig Ziglar Corporation, who carried double burdens while I secreted myself at our lake home and wrote much of this book. Of necessity, several members of the staff handled their regular jobs as well as some of the things I should have been doing myself. Thank you to Ron Ezinga, then president of the Zig Ziglar Corporation, and Denny Roossien, then executive vice president, who relieved me completely of most of my responsibilities and helped make this book possible.

A double-special thank-you goes to my administrative assistant, Laurie Magers. If any man ever hit the jackpot in an executive assistant, the author of this book certainly did. Not only did Laurie do the work beautifully and skillfully, but she mastered a new word processor in order to do so. I include an entire segment in *Secrets* on "Professionals"—no book could be completed without professional help—and Laurie Magers is certainly professional in every respect. It's also significant that her "bragging" on the book as she typed the manuscript kept me excited and encouraged. Thank you, Laurie.

If you are even casually familiar with my work, you undoubtedly know that I never undertake any major project without the knowledge, support, and enthusiastic help of the Redhead, my wife and my life for over fifty-six beautiful, fun-filled years. Thank you, Sugar Baby, for being you, for being mine, and for always being there.

To the salespeople of America, who are, in my mind, the real heroes of this century, I also want to say thank you. We still have much to do regarding our profession, but much progress has been made. I'm fervently convinced that as you read and apply the principles in this book, you will be more professional, and the net result is that all of us—including the salesmen of the future—will benefit from it.

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Zig Ziglar (1926–2012) was the bestselling author of many books on personal growth, leadership, sales, faith, and success, and a speaker who worked with clients and corporations of all sizes, from Fortune 500 companies to churches, schools, and nonprofit associations.

Kevin Harrington is the founder of the Secrets of Closing the Sale Master Class inspired by the Master of Sales—Zig Ziglar. He's also an original Shark from the hit TV show *Shark Tank* and a successful entrepreneur for more than forty years. He's the cofounding board member of the Entrepreneurs Organization and cofounder of the Electronic Retailing Association. He also invented the infomercial and helped make "But wait, there's more" part of our cultural history. He's one of the pioneers behind the As Seen on TV brand and launched more than five hundred products generating more than $5 billion in global sales. He's also the author of several bestselling books including *Act Now: How I Turn Ideas into Million Dollar Products*, *Key Person of Influence*, and *Put a Shark in Your Tank.*

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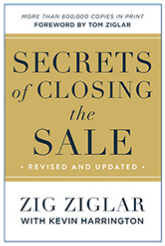
We hope you've enjoyed reading *Secrets of Closing the Sale*!



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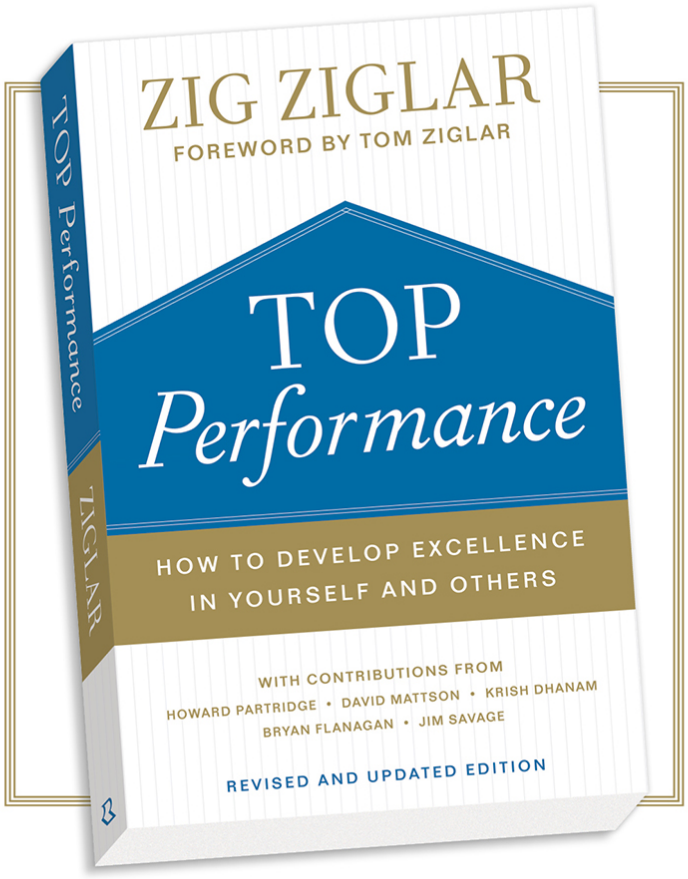

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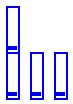
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